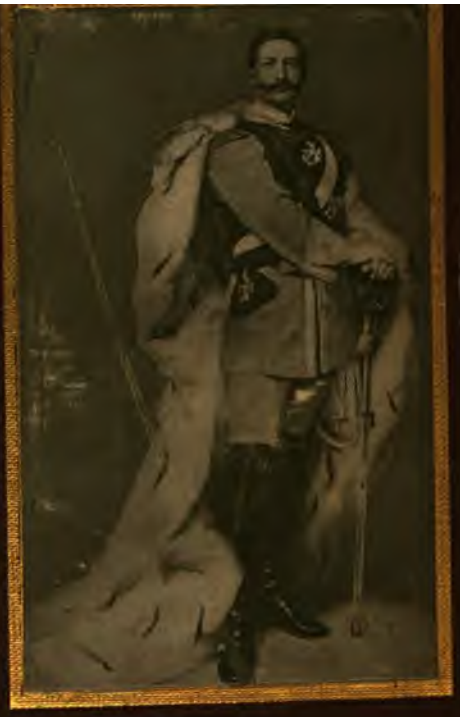
THE KAISER AS HE IS



1. William II., German emperor.

Mein ganzes Bestreben und Meine ganze Arbeit ist darauf gerichtet Mein Vaterland gross, mächtig und geachtet zu sehen

Wilhelm I.R. 1889

A COLLECTION OF WORKS
ABOUT
Emperor William II
made in admiration
of his life and deeds

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The Kaiser As He Is

or

The Real William II

(Le Véritable Guillaume II)

by

Henri de Noussanne

Translated into English by

Walter Littlefield

Author of "The Truth About Dreyfus," and Editor of "Lettres d'un Innocent"

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York and London
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1905

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

TO

MM. J. DELAPORTE, Fr. GERHARDT

BRUCK-GILBERT AND H. L.

WHOSE COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE OF TEUTONIC

MEN AND THINGS

HAS BEEN OF PRECIOUS AID TO ME

H. N.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

IF M. de Noussanne's little volume were simply what it appears to be on the surface—a fascinating collection of intimate and lively sketches—the necessity of introducing author and book to an audience of English readers might be questioned, and the appearance of such an introduction regarded as an obstacle to the fun that is to come and a damper on its exuberance and freedom. Why the Kaiser dismissed Bismarck, coerced the Poles, despised Socialists; how he addresses the members of his family, his soldiers, his subjects; what he thinks and what he does, would require no prefatory note. Cable despatches from Berlin have long given these things the background and atmosphere necessary to fill them with a human interest that has probably never before been bestowed upon the acts and words of any man.

But one does not have to venture far in these pages before realising that the author has undertaken the exposition and solution of a very serious problem. The anecdotes concerning the whims of the monarch, his ideas on social and domestic economy and the army, his criticisms of, and his achievements in, the arts of expressions are all, through the Frenchman's graceful and subtle pen, recorded as formative influences cast upon the King by the man von Hohenzollern, and hence upon the Emperor, and ultimately upon the people of Prussia and the Germans of the Federation.

Before the world to-day, the German Kaiser stands as the type and symbol of all that is German in culture, thought, and industry. But is he the true type and symbol? Do Germans themselves observe in him the same mentality and physique that do foreigners? To the answering of these questions, M. de Noussanne devotes many serious pages.

The line of demarcation which separates genius from something else is finely drawn and often indiscernible. Many there are who, placing themselves on one side of the line, have been remorselessly thrown over upon the other by the judgment of the world. It would perhaps be too much to expect a Frenchman to place Wilhelm II. elsewhere than upon the further side. M. de Noussanne, although polite, gracious, and free from malice, is no exception. Our author believes that his analysis of the Imperial mind will be confirmed by history. He may be right. But it should not be forgotten that the German Empire of the future will possess quite as many opportunities for the genius as for the madman.

In 1840, Louis Napoleon landed at Boulogne and let fly a tame eagle. The world laughed and took him for a fool. Thirty years later, as Emperor of the French, this same Louis Napoleon declared war on Germany. The world became serious and took him for a statesman. In each case the world was mistaken. In regard to Wilhelm von Hohenzollern, König von Preussen and Deutscher Kaiser, the world has been mistaken only once. On his accession, sixteen years ago, it looked upon him as an erratic but quite unimportant individual. Since that time he has made many speeches, indited many letters and telegrams, composed some music, and painted a few pictures. He has variously been the subject of hatred, contumely, and jest; of panegyric, ironical and otherwise; but of in-

difference, never. Having fooled the world once to his own advantage and possibly to the advantage of his people, will he do it again with similar results? His policy, so far, has been one of energetic preparation and of sudden feverish feints. Germany has seemed to be on the point of accomplishing something. Will the Kaiser fool the world a second time and have her accomplish it?

But whether for Imperial weal or woe, whether permanency as a world Power or wreck and disintegration follow the reign and administration and dominance of Wilhelm II., M. de Noussanne has prepared his readers for even the most surprising eventualities. From the intimate data with which he provides us no one will question the author's deductions that the German Emperor's individuality has stamped its expression upon the face of Germany. But the author does not deny nor does he seek to evade the fact that this face, in the eyes of the world, has become a singularly remarkable visage —a visage, the strongest and most human features of which were not even dreamed of by the Prussians, the Bavarians, and the Saxons who witnessed the Imperial accession of the "never-to-be-forgotten grandfather" at Versailles. Now, have the German peoples wrought this change in spite of the German Kaiser, or has the German Kaiser wrought it in spite of them? Our author has no doubt on the subject, for he looks upon Imperial disaster as inevitable. Other critics of international politics are welcome to differ from him. The material which he furnishes is no less valuable to them than it is to himself.

Mr. St. Loe Strachey, in his introduction to that excellent little handbook on *German Ambitions*, draws a just distinction between the aspirations of Germany considered as a State and the aspirations of the people in-

habiting the various allied countries which go to make up the German Federation. Like M. de Noussanne, he is apprehensive of the former and full of sympathy for the latter. Racial unity brought about through national unity means, of course, progress and enlightenment for the race, provided the means taken to secure national unity be proper and dignified. So far, M. de Noussanne does not think that the aspirations of the German State, as reflecting to the world the character of the Kaiser, have been either. As a student of international politics, he offers an admirable key to Mr. Strachey's statement: "It is only by understanding German aspirations and the foundations of German policy and statecraft that we can tell how to act in particular circumstances."

Granting to our author his premise that the Kaiser is *un malade*, no one will accuse M. de Noussanne of having reached in an illogical fashion his conclusions —that the dismissal of Bismarck has brought about a weak and vacillating policy at home and a changing tentative policy aboad; that Socialism, nurtured and then despised has, under the Kaiser's irrational treatment, become a serious menace to the Imperial *régime;* that the army and navy under the thraldom of archaic discipline are rapidly losing their effectiveness as modern fighting bodies in which individual initiative should have weight; that industrials and agriculturists are making ducks and drakes of Germany's political economy; and that because of these things Germany is not likely to avail herself of any advantage which might otherwise accrue to her on her eastern frontiers at the death of that venerable Kaiser who now rules benignly those never-to-be assimilated heterogeneous masses in Austria-Hungary. It was inevitable that the dismissal of Bismarck should be followed by pliable and impres-

sionable ministers; that the ill-treatment of the Prussian Poles should cause these people to realise in their own way their title of being "without a country"; that attacks upon individual liberty should augment sympathy for the Socialist propaganda; that the Kaiser's futile attempts at Teutonic expansion on the Continent and across the seas should bring his chancellery into mortification at home and contempt abroad; and that his personal interference in matters of education, art, culture, and theology should become obnoxious to German experts and ridiculous in the eyes of the world. The material upon which these conclusions are based we have presented to us in concise, feverish, coherent chapters bristling with data and episode. Their trustworthiness is beyond question. Nowhere in the English language, I believe, are such brief and admirable surveys to be found of the more serious problems which are now agitating German statecraft and interesting German people. The chapters on the Poles Socialism, the Agrarians, the industrials, and the exact status of the Austro-Hungarian Empire are remarkable for their lucidity and force, and no one who pretends to a knowledge of Continental affairs can afford to ignore them. They carry conviction with them.

But what of M. de Noussanne's premise that the Kaiser is *un malade?* There are many, including myself, who would join issue with him. The anecdotes, episodes, and idiosyncrasies of mind, manner, and action which go to make up the most fascinating pages of his book, while admittedly trustworthy, require no sympathetic charity to interpret them far differently than our author has done. It is so easy to misjudge the interest that a conspicuous man may take in very little things, and the importance which he seems, at the time, to give to trivialities.

When we remember what Germany was at the close of the Franco-Prussian War and realise the position she now fills among the Powers, is it not going a little too far to designate her as a mere paradox of idiosyncrasies? And admitting the dominating influence of one man throughout a bureaucracy which is probably the most perfect and coherent that the world has ever seen, may we not ascribe his somewhat curious and often exasperating personality to the simple fact that he is a very human, alert, and active individual, who is unmindful of nothing which concerns humanity or the expression of life. Take away from the Kaiser's speeches, letters, telegrams, art criticisms, theological arguments, and paternal advice, the illusion of their seeming inappropriateness of time, place, and manner of utterance, and their author may then declare with all sincerity and with the consciousness that his egotism will be justly appraised: *Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto.*

W. L.

NEW YORK, January 16, 1905.

INTRODUCTORY

Eitel! Eitel! Nichts ist in ihm als Eitelkeit!
(Vanity! Vanity! There 's nothing in him but vanity!)
BEBEL.

MANY Frenchmen rather like Emperor William II. Nearly all marvel at him. Very few have cared to study him in the light of facts without allowing themselves to be dazzled by his trappings and escapades, or fascinated by his vociferous oratory. Few, indeed, have asked themselves: "What is behind this mask?"

Here is a good-natured, ready-witted but weak and unstable fellow, who, born among honest merchants, would have travelled with pleasure in the interests of their business had he not been stung by the spider of art. Then it was that he yearned for pomp and noise, skipped from commercial to theatrical representation, and rigged out the theatre for costume plays to be performed at his will and by puppets of his own choosing.

His Majesty William II. boasts of having taken the *rôle* of Frederick the Great and yearns to continue in it. Among his many delusions this is one more. The only great captain from whom the Kaiser seems to draw inspiration is "le Capitaine Fracasse."

A soldier—he is merely that for his diplomats: a diplomat—he is merely that for his officers. As a political economist— . . . One knows full well the financial extremity of both Emperor and Empire!

As a scribbler, an "impressionable," a lecturer, he is in his proper place in a parlour, not on a throne—the hypocritical Teutonic agencies and the vows of his sympathetic familiars, notwithstanding. They are ever ready to "save his face" before the world.

He has won popularity by appearances. He has infatuated the phlegmatic Teutons, flattered to be governed by this "Semillant Brandebourgeois," whom his officers among themselves dub ironically, "The Emperor of the French." He has charmed, hypnotised, and affrighted Germany, which, since his first joyous exhibitions of power, he has put in that flattering and dramatic situation, best elucidated in familiar language by saying that a hen has hatched out a duck.

I say this neither in irreverence nor frivolity. It is my sincere impression, set forth without circumlocution. Far from me is all pretention to historical plan, scope, and finish. I simply desire to deduce from the acts of Emperor William II., and from the known facts, whatever meaning they may have, without error and without offence to good taste. This may possibly result in certain Frenchmen realising that they have been wrong in taking so seriously the merits and influence of this superfluously important Teutonic monarch.

Truly, no crowned head of State has done his monarchy more harm, nor so completely and unconsciously betrayed the faith of the majority of his people. This sovereign, fascinating as he is, has, by his distorted dreams, his recantations, and his escapades, hastened the impending victory of the Social Democrats and so shaken the German Federation that one may almost hear the edifice crack.

It is true that his accession came at a critical time; but was he not wrong in declining to take into account the difficulties of his trust and in believing that words

and gestures would suffice to lead his subjects? Even so, he should have employed those words and gestures which conformed to the times and circumstances. He has never known how to do this. In recognising his qualities of heart and mind, of which the good effects are so largely rendered nought by a malignant vanity plunging him into convulsions of humour and depressions of conscience and betraying, in certain circumstances, an absolutely regrettable lack of justice and rectitude, one can only pity him. He is mentally deranged (*un malade*[1]), and has never been anything but mentally deranged.

What Germany needed was a serious, silent, trustworthy, and cautious ruler. Fate gave her a master who, on a certain occasion, had the whim to decorate his head with a pasteboard crown, in imitation of Charlemagne's, to take in his hands an orb and sceptre —nothing but stage "properties"—and thus, enveloped in the cloak of the Cæsars, to have himself photographed.

H. N.

[1]This word, which literally means a person mentally deranged, cannot here be properly rendered in English, as its harshness is toned down by the use of the pronoun *ce* instead of *il—c'est un malade*. . . .—TRANSLATOR.

CONTENTS

PART I.

ROYAL QUALITIES IN THE MAN.

THE KAISER AS HE IS

PART I

Royal Qualities in the Man

CHAPTER I

GERMANY AT THE ACCESSION OF WILLIAM II.

TO see himself Emperor and King at the age of twenty-nine; to rule a state of forty-five million souls, a most powerful state, one in full view of prosperity and development; to be related to nearly all of the Imperial and Royal families of Europe; to maintain a formidable hand in a triple alliance of nations, formed for the express purpose of perpetuating German conquests; to command an army that was still quivering with joy over victories won on the battlefields of Hanover, Denmark, Austria, and France; to possess as Prime Minister the greatest diplomat of the nineteenth century; to benefit by the respectful affection with which Germany surrounded the venerable Emperor, William I., and by the universal sympathy acquired by that good, passive Prince, Frederick III.; to exercise by himself, as *summus episcopus* of the

Protestant Church, a power reaching the very souls of his subjects; to feel himself welcomed with joy by a nation loving activity and eager for political, religious, and social renovation; and finally to unite in his person at the time of his coming the pleasing, conquering gifts of youth: these are the things which, on the 15th of June, 1888, the Fates and a gracious fairy's wand bore to Frederick William, Albert Victor of Hohenzollern, German Emperor, King of Prussia, Margrave, Burgrave, Count, Prince, Duke, and Grand Duke of fifty-four municipalities.

If we realise that the death of the old Emperor William I. took place in March of the same year, and that Frederick III. expired four months later in San Remo, where he had gone to regain the health which had been so terribly shattered by his campaigns in France, we may say that the reign of William II. practically followed that of William I. The grandson succeeded the grandfather.

During five or six years, the old monarch, infirm, gouty, and almost in his dotage, had absolutely given into Herr von Bismarck's hands all the responsibilities of carrying on the Government; and by his taste for power, the intoxication of his diplomatic successes, and the absolute unscrupulousness which characterised him, the "Vice Emperor" held everything within his grasp.

"The State was he—he was the State." (*L'État c'etait Lui.*)

As Prince von Hohenzollern, the future William II. had seen, not without a certain displeasure, this surrendering of power into the hands of a man, who, as Count, Prince, and "Bismarck," was, in his eyes, far beneath royalties by Divine Right. But why should he indulge in recriminations? His sire and grandsire

were still living. Although the latter was already on the brink of the grave, the prospect of a double succession seemed to the young Prince still so remote, that he was probably more surprised than any one else by the rapidity of events, and was really ill prepared to assume the heavy responsibility which so suddenly devolved upon him.

Herr von Bismarck received without the least uneasiness this "young man" (Bismarck habitually called him *ce jeune homme*), whom he knew to be hot-headed but inexperienced. He would undertake to be his mentor and would guide him, he believed, according to his own pleasure. The Iron Chancellor, therefore, saw no reason why he should not play his part and add to the din of congratulations with which the new Emperor was received. Without, indeed, looking upon his novice monarch exactly in the light of the "little beam" in the fable, the Prussian Talleyrand doubtless thought: "He may have all the honours; I, the actual power!"

It is easy to appreciate these delusions of Herr von Bismarck.

No trustworthy impression had hitherto been given of the capacity of William II. as the head of State. Those studies, devoid of method, carried on at Cassel under the general direction and personal guidance of Hinzpeter, and roughly finished off at the University of Bonn amid horseplay, barbaric duels, carousing, and *schläger* scars; his courses in military instruction, his athletic exercises, and his successive regimental commissions, conveyed no idea of what really was to appear.

This *jeune homme*, almost as unknown to the nation as was the destiny which called upon him to rule it, was anticipated with affection and received with jubilant enthusiasm. Whom better could his subject

serve? All looked to him for the realisation of their hopes. In him were symbolised tradition and progress and the nebulous dreams and vast schemes with which the German soul is full; and the brand-new Empire, now under full growth, enthusiastically threw itself at the feet of the youthful monarch.

What did they know of the successor of Frederick III.? Very little. The gazettes, fashioned in conformity with Royal authority, made note of a few hardly mild personal anecdotes. More precise information people could gather from an address made in favour of peace and from two letters to one of his professors, Herr Vogt, on the education best suited to the youth of Germany.

There were no other illuminating data on the enigmatical mind of the young man. The address referred to was declaimed in reply to a discourse delivered by the first president of the Provincial Landtag of Brandenburg. Among other aphorisms the Prince had announced that " his love for peace had been inspired on viewing the verdant fields from a car window."

There is nothing extraordinary in this sentiment. In fact, it is quite a common experience for a young man to have — when the horrors of war are brought home to him while viewing the benefits of peace in nature.

As to his ideas on education, he wrote himself down against the ridiculous mania carried on by German philologues and *Herren Professoren*, who vied with each other in decomposing Greek and Latin terms, root by root, and chopping each word up as with a scalpel. In his opinion, time spent on Greek and Latin syntax analysis was crazy nonsense (*ein rasender Unsinn!*). Did not one forget to enjoy the imagination of Homer, the energy of Demosthenes, and the grace of Horace,

when thus instructed? How could one in this fashion expect to read these geniuses of antiquity with the enthusiasm which they ought to inspire in one's soul?

This is perfectly sound talk and quite worthy of any student who remembers anything about his school-day "grind" in ancient classics.

Then, a trifle tardy in their appearance, appeared certain episodes of William II., written on the supposition that his activity was well known.

It seems that one day, when Colonel of a Hussar regiment in Berlin, he decided to put an end to the gambling habit and to the ravages caused by it among the officers under his command. He ordered the closing of the club where his subordinates gave themselves up to their favourite passion. Their president, a certain Prince R——, at once set out in search of Emperor William I., and begged him to intercede with his grandson so that the embargo might be removed. The Emperor sent for this enemy of skat and baccarat and communicated the petition to him.

"Your Majesty," replied Prince von Hohenzollern, "will you allow me to ask you a question: Am I still the Colonel of my regiment?"

"Certainly."

"Very well. Then your Majesty must permit me to look after my command without interference of any sort; otherwise I throw up my commission."

This attitude rather pleased the old Emperor. He hastened to reassure this officer whose soul was so proudly moulded.

"Remain at your post," he ordered. "I should never find so good a Colonel."

When the president of the club went to the Emperor to get the expected answer, William I. said to him:

"I 'm very sorry indeed. I tried everything, and

all for nothing. The Colonel would not even listen to me."

Whether true or false, trustworthy or merely trumped up for flattery, the story illustrates very well what one knows of the sensitive, dramatic character of William II.

In short, the allied German peoples received him with that same sympathetic curiosity which was properly due an amiable youth who stepped into the shoes of a venerable, grumbling, and peevish Emperor of ninety years. To this circumstance should be added the fact that, for fifteen years, Socialism had existed hardly as a constitutional danger. It then (1888) manifested itself solely as a political economical problem of relative urgency, which constantly invited delays on the part of those whose mission it was to solve it.

In the Reichstag, the Government majority had passed into the hands of the National Liberal party, in which Herr von Bismarck liked to confide. This wealthy, industrious, and energetic party was composed of the Protestant middle class. It believed itself to be thoroughly progressive when compared with the Conservatives of the Right representing the old Prussian nobility whom the Chancellor found behind the times, because it resented his absolutism and the scornful oblivion in which this son of a poor little country squire, this parvenu by personal merit, had left it.

Had he not said of this old party, that "half of its members was composed of *actionnaires* (actionaries, stockholders), and the other half of reactionaries"? This ironical joke cost him the hatred of this cavilling nobility, which believed itself to be the most faithful prop of the Crown and in perfect accord with its ideals. The advent of William II. should mean for the nobles a

millennium. A new reign would permit them to emerge from the shadow!

Court festivities had long been lacking in bigness, vivacity, and gaiety. The Empress Augusta, worthy wife and mother, was a perfect type of the German middle class. A good housewife, musician as well as manager, and very watchful of the palace accounts, she quickly responded to the needs of unfortunate people, who never asked of her in vain, but she was not attracted to festivities in which her old age no longer found pleasure. In short, to repeat a saying formerly applied to our own country: "Germany was weary" (*l'Allemagne s'ennuyait*).

At that time international questions were absorbing German official life. People had scarcely recovered from the anxiety caused in Europe by the Schnoebel incident, which had just missed bringing about a second quarrel between France and Germany in circumstances far more dangerous for the German nations than those of 1870.

Many Germans no longer believed in the plotting policy of the Chancellor, who had not only wished but had conspired for the incident in question—not probably with the idea of actually causing hostilities, but for the vain satisfaction of showing that all-powerful Germany could indulge in any whims she pleased in regard to her neighbour, the vanquished nation of the West.

When the Schnoebel affair had subsided through the payment of an indemnity and without honour for Wilhelmstrasse, it was certainly a genuine disappointment for the political and military clubs beyond the Rhine.

This was not the first eclipse of the Bismarckian star, but it was probably the most complete. An evil

day was dawning for Herr von Bismarck. The families of the allied Princes, and especially the Hohenzollerns, awaited, therefore, with impatience a firm hand which should serve to bridle caprices of authority as exemplified by the brutish Prime Minister, and should direct the Imperial policy in a kindlier and more tranquillising manner.

Thus, all was smiles for the new reign. The task was easy. No incomparable intellect, no brain of genius were needed to steer the Hohenzollern ship. The real difficulty had been overcome at Sedan and Frankfort.

The Germans needed more especially a man of good sense, a thoughtful man, one who knew how to choose his aids, and, who, after having chosen them judiciously, would give them a free and unrestrained hand within their functions. They needed a man who could check the senile idiosyncrasies of Herr von Bismarck, and, at the same time, continue to utilise to the advantage of the Crown whatever the great Chancellor possessed in way of ascendency through his incontestable influence at European Courts, except in Russia, where they cordially detested Prussian diplomacy, the sly tricks of which agree badly with the frigid duplicity of the Slav. They needed a politician bringing to them a well-thought-out plan of government without any taint of the transcendental in illusions or dreams; one foreseeing the inevitable changes, which operate in the brain of modern people, and ready to endure philosophically the censure as well as the flattery of the press—a power against which the greatest potentates to-day are able to do little; a patient, forbearing man, tranquil enough to show sentiment in force, reserve, and that meditation which teaches the true practice of the individual and the exact significance of diplomacy.

They needed an Emperor who should be discreet in bearing toward the allied Princes, tranquilly continuing a ripe and staple policy and knowing how to show sufficient modesty to excuse the unheard-of and insolent luck of those victories won in the last thirty years. In a word, they needed a Prince congenial to that German sequence and method which had brought about such marvellous things in the last half of the nineteenth century.

Such was the hoped-for master of contemporary Germany, which expected to find in him certain solid virtues that would not be seriously marred by a little vivacity and spruceness.

Was William II. such a monarch?

Most certainly not.

CHAPTER II

WILLIAM II. VISITS EUROPEAN COURTS

FROM his very first acts as Emperor and King, William II. distinguished himself.

His speech from the Throne, full of pious terms of Biblical citations in support of Divine Right, of allusions to the holy origin of the Empire (as though God had, for all eternity, created the world for the benefit of the German Federation), appeared extraordinary in a young monarch, who came into power toward the end of the nineteenth century.

It was thus, however, that William II. produced his first shock.

The second soon followed. In certain occasional speeches made to soldiers and sailors, he harangued them as "comrades," and called upon them to fight with him a certain indefinite enemy "elbow to elbow," "shoulder to shoulder."

Having thus spoken, the young Kaiser started on his journeys.

He showed a certain cleverness in planning his visits to royalties, and began with the Kings, Princes, and Dukes of the Federation.

The first sovereign whom he honoured as guest, was King Charles of Würtemberg.

He had chosen him in preference to the reigning Princes of Bavaria and Baden because, at that time,

Würtemberg looked with favourable eye upon the supremacy of the Hohenzollerns over the German states.

Bavaria, on the other hand, was still fretting under the Federal obligations which it had consented to assume when carried away by the enthusiasm of the victories of 1870. As to the Wittelsbachs, the ancient glory of their past caused them to regard with a jealous eye the present domination of the Prussian house.

On September 25, 1880, William II. reached Stuttgart. He waxed poetical:

"This marvellous kingdom," he declaimed, in speaking of Würtemberg, "this great people over whom your Majesty reigns produced in the Middle Ages the most noble Princes to be found in German history. I particularly recall the fact that the land of Swabia was the cradle of my own dynasty, and that in my veins, as well as in the veins of those who are here reunited, gushes the blood of Swabia."

From Würtemberg he passed into Bavaria. There he announced to Prince Luitpold that, after the death of his grandsire and sire, he had been "summoned to the German Throne by an impenetrable design of the Almighty" (*durch des Himmels unerforschlichen Ratschluss*).

Munich papers speculated at some length on the profoundness of this legend. Not one could discover the mystic meaning which, some people said, was hidden therein, but certain wicked tongues went so far as to say that it contained nothing more than a youthful platitude.

Toward the Grand Duke of Baden, he showed himself solicitous and affectionate. He reminded him that the venerable Grand Duke (brother-in-law, as we know, of William I.) had always looked upon him, his

grandnephew, as "the son of the house" (*als Sohn des Hauses*).

This was a very praiseworthy sentiment to be sure, but it lasted about as long as a torch of straw. To-day, alas! Potsdam and Carlsruhe are at loggerheads and "the son of the house" has gone so far as to refuse to his cousin, Prince Max of Baden, the command of the 8th Army Corps (Baden troops).

It would be superfluous to follow William II. throughout his peregrinations to the German Courts. Still, it is proper to note, that in some respects this tour of investigation was a remarkable undertaking.

He was careful to observe the shades of distinction and titles of all these Princes and petty Princes whom, in his own conscience, he was prone to look upon as vassals. William II. "laid his homage" at the feet of the Kings, "thanked most humbly" the Dukes and the Grand Dukes, "addressed cordial thanks and deep-felt sympathy" to the Princes, and finally pressed in a familiar manner the hand of "his most dear Herr Burgermeister."

The King of Saxony probably holds the record of having received the most highly coloured epithets which William II. addressed to the heads of the Federated States: "Most Serene Highness, exalted and powerful prince, dear cousin, and good brother" (*Durchläuchtigster grossmächtigster Furst, freundlich lieber Vetter, und Bruder*), said the Emperor to him at Gorlitz on the 9th of September.

What touching episode of French history comes before the eye?—Louis XIV., from the top of the grand staircase at Versailles, haranguing the Prince de Condé, covered with the laurels of Seneffe or of Lerida.

In the same way that he had arranged his round of visits to the German Courts, the Kaiser now prepared

his foreign itinerary, and asked himself which foreign Court he should first honour by his Imperial and Royal presence. He settled upon Russia, more especially with the idea of renewing by his own gift of diplomacy the relations between St. Petersburg and Berlin which, for a few years, had been a trifle strained.

In Russia he was received with sympathetic curiosity; Russians expected much from him; they desired to know him. There was an exchange of effusive courtesies; there were banquets and pageants.

He remained ten days (from the 14th to the 24th of July, 1889) in the capital of the Russian Empire. That was too long. And one perceived almost immediately by two eloquent signs that he had not obtained the results which he had flattered himself that he would.

On the day after his return the official *North German Gazette*, in which appears, as one knows, Imperial *communiqués*, published in reply to Russian comments this bitter paragraph:

"It is perfectly true, and quite naturally so," said the *Norddeutsche*, "that the initiative of the Kaiser's visit to St. Petersburg should have been taken by Berlin; but to declare that the hope of a Russo-German *rapprochement* received more nourishment in Berlin than in St. Petersburg is a proof of Asiatic vanity and folly."

It was perhaps impolitic to go immediately from Russia to Sweden; still, one who is acquainted with the cool relationship which exists between the Empire of the Czars and the dual Kingdom of Sweden and Norway will realise that a visit to Stockholm directly on leaving St. Petersburg was to go in search of consolation and admiration which had not been found where hoped for.

King Oscar received the young Kaiser affectionately.

And William II., carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, begged the Swedish monarch to be the godfather of his fifth son. This request was a trifle awkward, for it obliged the King of Sweden to visit the German Emperor about August 31st, the date fixed for the baptism, while the Czar could not find it convenient to appear in Berlin until later.

After Stockholm comes Copenhagen.

The Kaiser waxes more and more fascinating. He finds himself among friends—nothing but friends. His sensitive heart expands. He strikes up an anthem in favour of peace.

Instantly the French, who are always ready to be taken in by foreigners, always inclined to enjoy delusions concerning the worth or sentiments of men not of their country, attempted to inspire in the young Emperor the after-thought of an ideal union between France and Germany based on a restitution of the lost Provinces.

This was too much, and they soon had occasion to perceive it.

On the 16th of August, 1889 (the nineteenth anniversary of Mars-la-Tour), William II. delivered at Frankfort-on-the-Oder one of those vehement speeches in which he spoke of his "iron character," of his "iron zeal," and of his firmly established will "never to give up a single stone of that territory conquered by his father and Prince Frederick Charles."

Just three days before this memorable oratorical effort, Vienna had beheld him within her walls. There he eulogised "the penetrating soldier's glance" (*den scharfen Soldaten blick*) of his Majesty Francis Joseph—a rather singular compliment to be addressed to the old Emperor who had suffered all possible mortification on battlefields.

Was it a species of joke or an insult?

Between the 11th and 13th of October, the Emperor of Russia returned the Kaiser's visit of July. According to diplomatic usage, Alexander III. gave his toast in French; William II. responded in German.

A couple of days later a more significant inconsistency happened. The Kaiser had taken his guest to the officers' club of the First Regiment of Grenadier Guards, called the Emperor Alexander Regiment. Now the German monarch, least of all, should not have been ignorant of the friendly relations which already existed between France and Russia; and he was hardly propitious, it would therefore seem, when he delivered himself of these sentiments:

"I drink," cried the babbling Emperor, "to the health of those who fought for their country at Borodino, who struggled victoriously with us at Arcis-on-the-Aube and at Brienne. I drink to the brave defenders of Sebastopol and to the valiant warriors of Plevna!"

William II. might have found in Russian history memories that were less disagreeable to France. He did not think of that. The desire to turn a fine phrase, to produce a certain effect, had carried him beyond all reflection.

In replying to this fantastic speech, Emperor Alexander uttered two lines:

"I drink," sedately returned the Czar, "to the health of my brave Grenadier Regiment."

After the departure of his noble guest, William II. started off again on his round of visits.

He saw his grandmother, Queen Victoria, whom he called "a very superior lady on account of her wisdom and counsel"; his cousin, King Charles of Roumania, for whom later in Berlin he struck up a great friendship

which was not entirely thrown away, since Roumania, according to some, may enter the Triple Alliance; Queen Emma of Holland, to whom he gave a course in history on their ancestor, William of Orange; and he received King Humbert and Queen Marguerite of Italy and told them about his "faithful Berliners." Moreover, he discovered for his guests this happy formula of welcome: "Fair Germania receives her sister, lovely Italy, and by my mouth bids both your Majesties welcome!"

On November 1, 1894, the unexpected death of Alexander III. occurred, followed by the accession of Nicholas II.

On that day, William II. was in the club-house of the Second Grenadier Regiment at Stettin. A telegram announces the death of the Czar. The Kaiser gets up and enters into a long string of reminiscences concerning the sire and the grandsire of the new Czar, but the only allusion he makes to the accession of Nicholas II. is to emphasise the fact of the difficult heritage which fell to the son of Alexander III. and to pray God to accord His assistance to the young Russian Emperor "in the hard mission (*zu dem schweren Amt*) which devolved upon him."

The Kaiser touched on the condition of vast Russia, here and there always in ferment. This allusion was only of relative cleverness and was hardly appreciated at the Winter Palace, where they do not permit dangerous spectres to be conjured up, lest these spectres should take corporeal form.

The year 1895 brought the dedication of the Kiel Canal. In replying to the speech made by the burgermaster of this town, he launched forth upon a long dissertation from the philosophic point of view of the *rôle* played by oceans in the life of the terrestrial globe.

"Seas do not separate," declared his Majesty; "seas unite; and the seas henceforth united by this new channel will reunite, *lieber Herr Burgermeister*, the people in prosperity and peace."

Then, plunging into the field of metaphysics, the Kaiser called the ocean "the emblem of eternity" (*das Sinnbild der Ewigkeit*).

What ridiculous logic! Seas, of course, are limited by their shores, while the essence of eternity presupposes in a thing no limits at all and represents infinitude of time.

We should trouble ourselves for nothing, if we pointed out all the examples of contradiction between ideas and words, between the words and the acts of the German Emperor. A great many inconsistencies, however, one would readily excuse on account of his youth. Thus one might expect that as he grew older his language and attitude would show the benefit of his experience. This theory is a delusion, however, inspired by indulgence. To be sure, he has made a little progress. One recognises a little more continuity between the subject of which he treats and the nation to which he addresses himself, and in the terms which he employs; but does not one continue to find the same immoderate use of words, the same grandiloquence, dress-parade language, as it were, as of old?

According to the expressive phrase of Herr Lieber, ex-leader of the Catholic party in the Reichstag, he remains (to borrow the idea from the title of one of Victor Hugo's novels) "The Emperor Who Speaks,"—whenever he gets the chance.

Once in a while, he succeeds in finding a happy word. It is not such a one, perhaps, as shows that his idea is "sincere," but such a one as makes it "diplomatic." That, after all, is the main thing.

One day, at the launching of the German battleship *Wissembourg*, he called France "the chivalrous enemy." On another occasion, apropos of a cyclone which had ravaged the American town of Galveston, he apostrophised thus: "The energy and ingenuity of the children of the New World are always equal to the vastness of their misfortune." Certainly an appropriately expressed idea, but this and others like it are mere flashes from the prevailing luridness of his speeches.

Ere long he falls into exaggeration. For example, glance at this telegram which he sent to Nicholas II. at the end of a visit that a Russian squadron paid to the German fleet at Danzig: "The Admiral of the Atlantic greets the Admiral of the Pacific."

The Kaiser in wishing to please his departing illustrious guest divided into two parts — Atlantic and Pacific—all the oceans of the world, and, like Napoleon on the shores of the Niemen, he gave the Orient to Russia and reserved for himself the Occident!

Would you like to know what reply Nicholas II. made to this extravagant salutation?

He simply signalled from the top of the mainmast of his yacht, the *Polar Star:*

"*Bon voyage!*"

One remembers the visit made by William II. to his ally, Victor Emmanuel III., at Rome, in 1903. The Emperor surrounded himself with an escort of white Cuirassiers, giants of six feet six, brought expressly from Germany in order to emphasise in the most vivid fashion his triumphal march to the Vatican, and also to make more noticeable the ordinarily short statures of the Italian soldiers.

It is perfectly true that the Kaiser was able to impress enthusiastic southerners and Roman simplicity. But,

even with all this tinsel and studied stage setting, was he, when one thinks it over, a clever diplomat?

And what about this excursion to the Benedictines of Monte Cassino, in which he sought to induce the King of Italy to join him, utterly oblivious of the laws of the Peninsula, which do not recognise the existence of monastic orders? From a practical point of view, such an act might be considered as a *rapprochement* made to the German Catholics of the Centre, but, in so doing, ought William II. to have ruffled the sensibilities of the host who was entertaining him at the Quirinal?

No one, not even an Emperor, should exempt himself from that diplomatic law in which each thing is done in its own proper time. The very first quality of social tact, in order to speak or act, is to know how to await the propitious moment.

Now, in looking carefully into the acts of the Kaiser, we see that he mixes and jumbles together everything that should be separate. His nature is so exuberant and feverish, that, whether visiting Rome, St. Petersburg, or London, he seems to forget the preconceived object of his journey. His mind reverts to personal things, to the domestic politics of his Empire, and these reflections entirely absorb him. To employ a slightly vulgar expression, he "gets off his trolley" (*perd le fil*), and,—a still more serious matter,—he imagines that this is of no consequence.

Certain statisticians—persons of leisure and remorseless calculators—have established the fact that the German Kaiser is just now (April, 1904) on his eighty-sixth official journey to European Courts. These useful gentlemen would without doubt be at their wits' end if asked to express mathematically what advantage these visits have been to the Empire.

Only Paris, Brussels, and the little capitals of the Balkans have escaped. They are the only metropolises which have not had the honour of the Imperial visitations. Has the Kaiser ever gone there either as Prince von Hohenzollern or incognito? That is a subject which I shall take up later and especially in regard to Paris, when I come to examine "William II. and Love."

Rarely does the Empress accompany him, especially on his foreign trips. Nevertheless, she went to the Holy Land, and photographs taken there represent her as decked out in a hat quite similar to those which adorn the heads of robust Paris market women; this head-covering, however, worn with a grace entirely German, shielded her from the burning rays of the Eastern sun.

Constitutionally, the political *rôle* of her Majesty is naught. She has, like the Emperor, the title of "Imperial and Royal Majesty"; but in her journeys about Germany as well as at the receptions in the Palace of Potsdam, she is never (the protocol forbids it elsewhere) acclaimed in the same tone as her noble spouse. It very often happens that an orator, toward the end of his speech, will slip in the name of "Her Majesty, Empress and Queen," and finish by praying God for the health of "both their Majesties." But three-quarters of the harangue are delivered at the Kaiser, who answers by this expected formula: "The Empress and I. . . ."

For the most part, the speeches of the political, municipal, and administrative authorities contain the same stereotyped phrases of devotion and are poured forth in terms identically respectful. Except, of course, (and this has happened several times, especially at Juterbog and Minden) when the monarch signals the

burgermaster not to enter upon the allocution and to permit him to speak.

This expeditious proceeding is employed to gain time and also to give his Majesty sufficient opportunity to scatter about the manna of his own eloquence.

CHAPTER III

HOW WILLIAM II. DISMISSED BISMARCK

ONE of the first political acts of William II.—probably the most sensational—which offers a broad field for study on this interesting monarch was the dismissal of Herr von Bismarck.

The drama which culminated in the forced retirement of the aged statesman was developed through an uncommonly cunning and short struggle between the Kaiser and his Minister.

On one hand, the monarch exhausted all the resources of ingenuity, patience, and ruse. On the other, the cunning Chancellor so allowed himself to be made a fool of, that one does not know whether to be more astonished at the blindness of the old diplomat, grown old in harness, who had imagined that his title of Chancellor would only depart from him with his life, or with the Imperial *roublardise* capable of employing the basest means to get rid of the burdensome Argus who, with his age, his character, and the importance of services rendered, had never been stirred to take part in the flattery so dear to vain young men.

For some time the circumstances of this retirement of Herr von Bismarck under the pressure of William II. was a State secret. But the cruel Chancellor had no wish to carry the secret with him to his tomb at Sachsenwald. He confided to one of his old friends

and confidants, Hans Blum, the historian, the details of the Imperial intrigues which embittered his fall from power.[1]

The circumstances which accompanied this political event remained hidden away until 1900. Silence had not been broken either by the Kaiser or the Chancellor, and everybody, both at Potsdam and Friedrichsruhe, seemed to respect this tacit agreement of the two antagonists. How was it that Herr von Bismarck, feeling his end approaching, felt moved to reveal to Dr. Blum the true motives of his break with the Kaiser? It was owing to "a sudden resolution," writes the confidant of the Chancellor.

"One day in 1893, when I was at Friedrichsruhe, the Prince suddenly offered to relate the story to me. You may imagine how eagerly I accepted the proposal. I listened with the most lively curiosity to the recital which came from the mouth of one of the actors in this great historic drama. In the train, that evening, I jotted down in a memorandum book what the Prince had just said to me, so as not to lose a single sentence. A few days later, I wrote to the Chancellor with the idea of obtaining authorisation to publish these details immediately."

"No," he replied, "you may 'bring them out' after my death."

Dr. Blum scrupulously obeyed. It is now scarcely three years since he presented for the judgment of posterity this tragic-comedy of German history which was played fourteen years ago, having for scene the Berlin Court, for its victim the most powerful statesman of the century, and for author, scene-shifter, and director, whether avowed or concealed, his Majesty William II., Emperor and King.

[1] H. Blum, *Reminiscences of Prince Bismarck*, 1900.

"I shall be, I wish to be, my own Prime Minister," this modern Louis XIV. had declared from the Spree, to his familiars, on coming into power. This phrase, on being reported to the Chancellor, was considered by him to be mere child's play marking the beginning of a struggle. It was, indeed, in the field of international politics, where Herr von Bismarck was considered infallible and invincible, that the Chancellor and Emperor began to part company.

The Prime Minister energetically opposed those "visits of friendship" which the Kaiser had decided to pay to Russia, England, Greece, and Constantinople. He judged them premature, and was inclined to the opinion that his Sovereign should, for the present, occupy himself with internal affairs, and wait for men and events to come his way rather than to parade himself at the four points of the compass.

William II., on the contrary, eager and full of fire, boasted that he could conquer, by his own personal worthiness, all foreign ministers and sovereigns, just as he had dazzled "his faithful Berliners" by his animation and graces.

"Sire," said the distrustful Chancellor to him, "do not attempt to please everybody. You will never succeed in an *entente* with either London or St. Petersburg any more than you can blend fire and water. Everything that you say in one or the other of those cities will be repeated, interpreted, modified, and distorted. And you will come home with the reputation of a monarch who thinks in one way and speaks in another."

This was wise advice; but the Kaiser hastened to ignore it. He thought more than ever of freeing himself of a tutelage that was one perpetual obstacle to the projects on which his restless spirit thrived.

At this point the Kaiser perceived that the diplomats

in Wilhelmstrasse, although they trembled before Bismarck, were not sufficiently under the control of their Sovereign. He changed some, retired others, and, be it understood, he did this according to his own fancy and without consulting the Chancellor.

It caused an unheard-of commotion at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"I was distressed by all these changes," the Prince avowed candidly to Hans Blum; "everywhere I saw incapable men installed in posts which they could not fill. My eyes were not shut to the significance of these changes, which were the object of my greatest anxiety during my last days of power and even after my departure. I alone knew the difficulties of directing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

For the moment, Herr von Bismarck was disconcerted by the feverish activity of William II. which was such a strange contrast to the passiveness and childish placidity of William I. and the feeble resignation of Frederick III.; then he began to readjust matters. Here we have, he thought, the consequences of a youthful exuberance; but all this fine zeal will pass away "like the water in the Spree." He reassured himself, moreover, by sounding the support of the members of the Cabinet, who, up to that time had worked in perfect accord with himself. They, indeed, closed their ranks around their chief, and did not allow their prerogatives to be taken from them without attempting to defend them.

It was then at the beginning of 1890. It was the time of winter, when Herr von Bismarck usually suffered from severe attacks of rheumatism. One day, quite unexpectedly, the entire Ministry, even the private counsellors of the Emperor, Herren Hinzpeter and Douglas, came to see him.

"Look here, Prince," they said, "you must have a rest. Your health demands it. Go to the country or the seashore. But don't stay in Berlin where the excitement of affairs and the direction of politics are bound to have a deplorable effect on you."

The old Chancellor, far from suspecting any strategic move or mental reservation, thanked with effusion these bestowers of good counsel, and started off with a smiling face.

He had scarcely quitted Berlin, when there began, at the instigation of the Kaiser, certain subterranean intrigues destined to provoke the anger and violent opposition of Herr von Bismarck on his return. Thus began the memorable conflict between the Kaiser and his Minister, in which the latter seemed, in the eyes of the nation, to be at a decided disadvantage. But the old fox had already escaped more than one pitfall.

At this time, the Socialist question was greatly interesting the Emperor, and he flattered himself that he could solve it by the magic of his words. This furnished the first pretext.

Towards the end of 1889, the various governments of the German Federation drafted a bill for the "general defence," directed against Socialist agitation. This project Herr von Bismarck thought too mild, while the Kaiser judged it to be too severe. The Kaiser especially counted on a certain document from his own eloquent pen, "Edicts for the Protection of Work," in which he gave to Social Democracy counsels that it had not asked of him — counsels at which it only laughed, and which, since then, Social Democrats have always turned into derision. It was a childish delusion to imagine that the labour problem could be solved by sonorous and sentimental phrases ejected from the height of the Throne.

The Privy Council, and even Herr von Boetticher, Minister of the Interior, ever anxious to please, encouraged the Kaiser in his oratorical efforts. Bismarck brought all the weight of his influence to bear against this fine project.

On February 4th, there was a *coup de théâtre.* The famous "Edicts" appeared in the *Monitor of the Empire.*

That day the Court and the City, the Federal Governments and the millions composing the Federated States, became the stupefied witnesses of this new, extraordinary, and unheard-of thing: for the first time an official document had not been countersigned by the powerful Chancellor!

The Socialist party raised a cry of triumph.

"In this way," said the *Vorwärts*, "the Emperor, not being able to fight Social Democracy, adopts its programme for himself, puts himself at its head, and covers it with his cloak of embroidered golden bees."

As one sees, the first project launched by William II. against the enemies of the monarchy had the wonderful result of causing the Social Democrats to comment humorously on his Imperial Majesty's entry into their ranks. They simply saw in his advances an avowal of weakness.

This is the eternal history of concessions made to elated parties or to the passionate, rapacious masses.

"Give in, perhaps," said M. de Talleyrand, "but never confirm what you give in to."

The trouble with William II. was that he confirmed what he gave in to.

A great deed this—a noble act of generosity—one will say.

But, in fact, little did he understand the matter. He thought that he had been very adroit in extending a

friendly hand to plebeians vociferating against the Throne. The goodness which he affected and the pride which he believed he had dissembled were therein duly taken into account. At least Herr von Bismarck knowing well what to expect from Socialist Democrats had nothing of this nature to his credit.

The Reichstag elections of February 20, 1890, brought no change in the composition of the parties. Neither of the antagonists, Minister or Sovereign, received any advantage from the electorate, and each remained confident in his cause and in his prestige. Only the Ministers, colleagues of Herr von Bismarck, were disturbed. Caught between two masses which threatened to clash, they foresaw the gravity of the situation which their manœuvres had contributed to bring about.

"They were, in fact," said the Chancellor, "more or less conscious of the work of which they had made themselves the artisans. Prudently, they tried to draw themselves to one side as simple spectators of the duel."

Herr von Bismarck had not then counted on their alliance in order to protest against the impetuous publication of the famous Edicts. Deceived by the Ministers, he thought of the Council of State which ought to open its sittings, February 28th. Thanks to their more independent position, possibly the Councillors would speak to the Emperor with less servility.

Vain hope! The Council of State also inclined toward the monarch.

It was then that the Prince, fretting under his successive checks, enervated, and irritated, threw his customary prudence to the winds, and himself into the net which William II. held open for him. At the Council of March 13th, without having previously informed any one of his intention, Herr von Bismarck addressed

to Emperor and Ministers what may be called a sharply seasoned speech.

In a tone almost disrespectful, shaded with ill-concealed anger, the Minister recalled the order in council of the Prussian Cabinet in 1852, and even the terms of the Federal Constitution of 1871, according to which he alone was responsible to his Majesty for the internal and external policy of the Empire.

"As Imperial Chancellor and President of the Council of Ministers of Prussia," he cried, "I and I alone have the right to consult with the Sovereign concerning the principal measures of administration. Every incumbent of ministerial departments ought, as a necessary preliminary, to consult with me orally or in writing concerning projects of law which they submit for the signature of his Majesty.

"More than this," he added, "every bureau chief, who may be obliged to address to the Kaiser a report bearing directly upon the affairs of his department, is held to acquaint me with the matter in advance, to the effect that I may be present at the interview, if I consider it necessary."

From a synopsis of Herr von Bismarck's pretensions, it would seem that the Kaiser might naturally have received this denunciatory notice very badly.

But he did not!

Crafty as is ordinarily the case with weak persons, in whom pride is only an occasional factor of the will, the Kaiser exhibited a calmness and *sangfroid* which are not rare in nervous temperaments, and which would certainly have excited the distrust of Bismarck, if the latter had known his master better.

"That is a question which I must look into," tranquilly observed William II. "Draw me up a report on it, and I will decide."

The Prince had least suspected this non-committal reply. He was literally unhorsed by it.

On the following day, the anti-Bismarckian organs published, in a prominent place, a note, the origin of which there could be no possible doubt. This note pictured the case of the Chancellor and exaggerated its features to his disadvantage.

As to the colleagues of the Prince, his arrogance had disconcerted them and had diverted their support from him. They saw themselves obliged to obey two masters. Henceforth, a double motive must direct their acts, and they felt themselves condemned to serve as a buffer between two opposing forces. They were disturbed and had reason to be. In short, the political isolation of Herr von Bismarck was evident.

Such was the situation, when the chief motive for the rupture was imparted to the Prince in a manner entirely unexpected.

From the date of the very first Reichstag of the German Federation of the North, the Chancellor had been in the habit of conferring with the leaders of the principal constitutional parties, in order to shape parliamentary work. Those of them who were in the habit of visiting the Chancellor in search of instructions or advice in regard to the coming session did not fail to call on him. This manner of procedure had never called forth any comment from William I.; Bismarck thoroughly believed that it would not be opposed by the grandson any more than it had been by the grandfather.

Now we come to the most mysterious and at the same time the most inexplicable incident in the whole sensational drama.

"On March 14th," relates the Prince, "my wife informed me that my banker, Herr von Bleichroeder,

wished to speak with me at once. I received him immediately. For, such had been his conduct toward me even in my private affairs, that he had always appeared to be a man of affairs, of large ideas, very disinterested, and extremely ingenious, clever, and far-seeing. Thanks to him, I was relieved of a great deal of care in my private affairs, which I alone could not have carried on together with my political duties. He also allowed me unlimited credit, for my current expenses. I was astonished when, on this 14th of March, Herr von Bleichroeder informed me that he had come to request an audience for Deputy Windhorst, who had written to him with this in view.

"'Herr Doctor Windhorst,' I replied, 'knows perfectly well, that, as a deputy, he always has access to me and has no need for an intermediary.'

"'Also,' pursued Bleichroeder, 'that I may bring him with me.'

"My conversation with Windhorst concerned these two questions: 'Of what would the new Reichstag be composed, and what claims would be set forth in its published programme?' Windhorst asked me to re-establish the Catholic status as it had been before 1870. I declared the conditions to be 'excessive' and 'unacceptable'—words entirely inoffensive, which were repeated to the Emperor in quite a different sense.

"The Kaiser affected to believe that I had, through the medium of Herr von Bleichroeder, tried to assure myself of the collaboration of the Leader of the Centre with the idea of counting upon the support of this party in my contests with my Sovereign. If the Kaiser had only run his eyes over the organs of the Centre on the following day, he would have been able to appreciate with what bad humour these sheets commented on the conversation that Windhorst had with me. He would

have seen in what manner interested reports had distorted the exact sense of the interview and to what degree he had been deceived. Windhorst had not been a secret petitioner, and in any case his intervention was useless. If a secret agreement had been the true object of the interview, the Catholic press would naturally have maintained a diplomatic silence on the subject. But the Kaiser, owing to the excitement into which this false news had thrown him, did not take the trouble to examine all that, and acted without reflection."

Hans Blum after giving us what he calls "the Bismarck version," informs us, a few pages farther on, that the Prince revealed to him other things about this incident which he does not believe it prudent to relate.

The confidant's reserve is easy to understand. He had no desire to come in contact with that paragraph in the code which concerns the crime of *lèse-majesté*. But everybody sees without any trouble that the portion of the Chancellor's account reproduced is not very clear, or is, at least, incomplete.

Why had Windhorst employed the medium of Bleichroeder to interview Bismarck, when any number of times he had been received by the Chancellor without having had the need of any go-between?

Must we suppose that Herr von Bleichroeder was himself the instigator of this interview and that Herr von Bismarck's banker, disturbed at the turn of affairs in the conflict between Kaiser and Minister, thought to effect a sort of provisory compromise between the Chancellor and Windhorst?

Or, should we be content to stop at the hypothesis of a Machiavellian plan inspired by the Emperor with the aid of his Privy Councillors and the complicity of Bleichroeder, which resulted in compromising more

and more the Prime Minister in the eyes of the nation, by fixing up interviews for him under circumstances which public opinion, already suspicious, could hardly regard otherwise than compromising.

What seems to make such a supposition probable, is that from that very day a close watch was set around the Chancellor, so that the interview had scarcely terminated when the Kaiser was informed of it.

In any event, the Kaiser did not let the occasion slip to have a hand in the situation produced.

"Without loss of time," says Herr von Bismarck, "he sent the Chief of his Civil Cabinet, Herr von Lucanus, to notify me that I should inform his Majesty before engaging in political conversations with deputies.

"'Will you say to his Majesty,' I replied, 'that I yield to none the right to choose for me who shall pass through my doors.'

"Early in the morning of the following day, March 15th, the Kaiser himself called at the house and demanded to see me. I was still in bed. I dressed in all possible haste and found myself in the presence of the monarch.

"'What do these negotiations with Windhorst mean?' he cried in great agitation.

"I replied that there had been no negotiations, but simply an informal, personal conversation.

"Thereupon the Emperor insisted on his right to be informed beforehand of all negotiations of the Chancellor with parliamentary party leaders. I denied this pretension.

"'I can permit no one,' I cried, 'to spy upon my dealings with deputies, and I give no one the right to issue orders in my house.'

"'Not even if I issue them as your Sovereign?' replied the Kaiser, almost beside himself.

"'Not even in that case, Majesty. The orders of my Emperor stop at this threshold.'

"Then I added: 'Owing to a promise I made Emperor William I., I have remained in the service of his grandson. If I inconvenience your Majesty, I am ready to retire.'"

Rupture was now immediate and inevitable. The pitch had been reached which could only sound the open revolt of Herr von Bismarck or his downfall.

Still, it is somewhat singular that the ordinarily keen discernment of the Chancellor quite abandoned him in these dramatic circumstances. He had offered his resignation with the personal conviction that it would not be accepted. He did not believe the Kaiser capable of taking him at his word.

William II. was, indeed, surprised with the rapidity with which events were shaping themselves, but, knowing the violent disposition of the mind with which he had to deal, he did not precipitate matters. He took a day to consider. This silence served to deceive the Chancellor and to fortify him with the idea that the Emperor would back down.

The Chancellor gave himself therefore for the time no further concern as to the Kaiser's spasm of irritation, and was occupying himself with drawing up the requested report on "The Order in Council of 1852," when, on the morning of the 17th, the unexpected visit of General von Hahnke, aide-de-camp to the Kaiser, was announced.

The interview was short but eloquent.

"His Majesty," said the Imperial messenger, "awaits a request for the resignation of your Highness. He would be pleased to receive it by two o'clock."

"Will you say to his Majesty," replied the Prince with rising emotion, "that my state of health and the

serious import of a hasty resignation, in present circumstances, do not permit me to accede immediately to his order. It would be a lapse of conscience for me, toward both Emperor and Nation, if I should leave my post in the present state of affairs. To-day, by placing in his Majesty's hands a request for retirement, I should give history an entirely false impression of the actual situation. The Emperor has the power to dismiss me at any time. As for me, I cannot end my political career by an act the results of which I believe would be fatal for the German people and Empire."

General von Hahnke bowed himself out without another word and set off to carry this reply to the Emperor.

Excitement ran riot in ministerial quarters. How would the crisis end? Bismarck's colleagues, knowing his haughty character, asked each other with much concern, whether he were not leading himself on to a regretful extreme. On the other hand, they understood, when too late, that in working against Herr von Bismarck, they had been working against themselves and against all their successors. The Chancellor was the last obstacle to Imperial absolutism. With him broken, the others would not amount to much.

Now we see these Ministers, who, when he was in power only the day before, had worked against his plans, returning to him in his extreme. We see even those very politicians who had been the accomplices of the Kaiser, when he published his Edicts without the signature of the Chancellor, ranging themselves on Bismarck's side for the purpose of declaring that he must maintain the integrity of "The Order in Council of 1852," which they themselves had violated one month before.

Moreover, the Prince had revealed to them the

circumstances of his violent discussion with the Kaiser, and they agreed with the former "that his old age had a right to more respect from the young Sovereign." In short, they almost made his cause their own.

This was not all. In the evening of that very day they met at the house of Herr von Boetticher and decided to make a collective application to both Emperor and Chancellor, with the idea of arranging the difficulty in an amiable manner. But scarcely had they terminated their deliberation when an Imperial aide-de-camp knocked at Herr von Boetticher's door. He came, he said, to save the gentlemen their trouble. The Kaiser had no longer any need of their advice. His resolution in regard to Prince Bismarck had been taken.

Extraordinary, is it not? The scent of the Imperial police that knows in advance what is going to be decided at a gathering of ministers, and procures for the Kaiser the means of parrying a blow which has not yet been delivered!

In the meantime, the Kaiser became more exasperated when he learned from General von Hahnke that the Prince had refused to obey instantly. But he had no desire to keep up evasion.

Before the end of the afternoon of March 17th, the Chief of the Civil Cabinet, Herr von Lucanus, repaired to the Chancellor and repeated to him, in the Emperor's name, the request for his resignation and added that his Majesty was astonished at the delay. He even fixed the time when it should be presented.

To this Bismarck replied as follows: "I am ready instantly to affix my signature to a demand for dismissal, but, in order to present my resignation, which would be the last official document to emanate from a Minister, who fills a certain place in the history of Germany and Prussia, I must crave delay. I owe this to

myself and to history, which will one day know for what reason I have received my discharge."

It is evident that the Prince wished to gain time, hoping against all hope that William II. would hesitate when the decisive moment came.

But Herr von Lucanus dispersed this last delusion.

"His Majesty," added the Chief of Cabinet, "is pleased to offer you, in recognition of the services you have rendered the Crown and Nation, the title of Duke von Lauenbourg."

"Indeed," interrupted Bismarck with his usual grim smile, "had I wished, I could have been a Duke some time ago."

"I am also permitted to assure you," pursued von Lucanus, "that his Majesty has added to the title a stipend which would permit your Highness to maintain its rank."

"I have no doubt of his Majesty's benevolence," returned Bismarck, in ending the interview, "but you may, if you like, say to the Kaiser that I have behind me a career which I can hardly terminate for a bounty, like a letter-carrier."

This was categoric, almost insulting. Herr von Lucanus took himself off, doubtless well contented, for he was to be the first person interested in the retirement of the Chancellor.

A dissembling ambition had already made him a fuddling potentate, clever enough to play the game for William II., and even to inspire certain of his actions, and, although he could not then have been assured of the long and influential career which he was to run in the shadow of his master, he foresaw, nevertheless, the possibility of brilliant advancement which the withdrawal of the dominating and encumbering Chancellor could only facilitate.

During the three days which followed the interview between Herr von Lucanus and Herr von Bismarck, the latter worked on an exposition of the motives which had caused him to ask for retirement. This memorandum, which reached vast proportions, comprised a dignified and proper defence of his last official actions. The Prince desired, should it ever be published (it has not been up to the present moment) that the political world would, in reading it, take note of the fact that "reasons of health had nothing to do with this resignation." He especially demonstrated the fact that his presence in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was necessary for the safety of the Empire. No one had his experience or possessed, as he did, the confidence of foreign chancelleries. And if quite recently Russian-German relations had cooled a little, he undertook to attribute this to Imperial short-sightedness (*Autokratische Misz-griffe*) which little by little had restrained the powers attached to the office of Chancellor.

Finally, on March 20th, Prince Bismarck sent this famous memorandum to the Emperor, all properly drawn up in concise language.

"As this document was very voluminous," says Herr von Bismarck, "the Kaiser could not possibly have read it by the time he sent Lucanus and Hahnke with my resignation to sign. But my astonishment did not stop there. I, who had taken the utmost care to specify that it was not the state of my health which had induced me to seek retirement, was stupefied to read—and to be obliged to approve—that my resignation was necessary on account of my growing weakness."

All the same, with rage in his heart, Bismarck signed. But fallen colossus that he was, he preserved till the last day of his life the most intense hatred toward his conqueror. He even caused him to be attacked in his

organ the *Hamburger Nachtrichten.* In spite of certain formal messages and visits, the Sovereign and the Minister were never reconciled.

Even in death, the old Chancellor contrived in a most subtle fashion to revenge himself on the Kaiser; he conceived the idea of a sort of Parthian shot, which should be eternally directed against his ungrateful master. He ordered carved on the marble of his tomb these simple words:

"Here lies Prince Bismarck, a faithful servant of Emperor William I."

There is not a word, not a reference to William II.—nothing but an eternal oblivion.

CHAPTER IV

WILLIAM II.: HIS MINISTERS AND CONTEMPORARIES

IT should not necessarily be considered astonishing that the German Emperor treated the founder of modern Germany in the way he did. For the superior men of his epoch the Kaiser affects an enthusiasm as passionate as it is brief. With him admiration subsides as quickly as it arises, and with disconcerting rapidity. Whatever genius or talent inspires statues in his brain, they always have weak feet. They never stand long erect.

In the same way, in his heart, love cannot contend against self-esteem. When William II. discovers a man of established merit he becomes enthusiastic over him and then gives him the cold shoulder. The superiority which he recognises in himself suffers when brought in contact with another superiority. Essentially vain, he is, in consequence, jealous, and is never satisfied either with friendships or people that, sooner or later, grate on his sensitiveness. Consequently, the Ministers with whom he has surrounded himself, for the last fifteen years, have not all been of superior minds. Far from it.

He has only had four Chancellors: Bismarck, Caprivi, von Hohenlohe, and von Bülow. General Caprivi was put into power in order to transmit, in a military fashion, the wishes of his Majesty and execute them

when needed. Von Hohenlohe is a Prince, a very typical old noble, who announced, with reative success, the desires of the Sovereign in a slow, tired voice. On his retirement he received a fine autographic letter of thanks. Von Bülow, a name which recalls the von Bülow who decided the success of Waterloo, is a smooth, glib, and skilful orator, to whom his Majesty has already offered the title of Prince in order to thank him for the clever way in which he has extricated the Imperial Infallibilty from certain difficulties. But he had a bad time at the last elections when the Kaiser learned the truth about the Socialist victory.

Of the three Chancellors of his choice, therefore, only one, the last, is worthy of attention. And it may be added that if he is still able to hold his position it is that circumstances have become more difficult and that the time for oratorical delusions has gone by.

A few of the minor Ministers of the German Emperor have lasted for a time: Herr von Miquel, for example, who, at close intervals during the last seven or eight years, has been Financial Minister. Then there is Herr von Posadowski, Secretary of State for Agriculture.

Others have enjoyed Imperial favour to a high degree, as, for example, Admiral von Tirpitz, who fathers the periodical naval bills and pounds away for the augmentation of the fleet; General von Budde, who was asked to hold the portfolio of Commerce and Public Works in anticipation of the *rôle* he might be able to play on the railways of the Empire in case of mobilisation. There have also been Ministers of War, Generals Bronsart von Schellendorf and von Gösseler, the former a sort of foxy Teuton, celebrated for his moods and his bluntness, and the latter for ever in a fidget as to how his Majesty would view the condition of the army. Finally,

there is von Einem Rothmaier, the new Minister of War; incidentally he is an orator.

This last is said to be a man of some literary pretensions, to whom Goethe and Schiller are familiar, and who, in spite of Socialist opposition, knows how, amid his eloquence and wit, to work in a scheme for army augmentation or for the creation of a new army corps for Eastern Prussia—necessary innovations, say the official sheets, "on account of the permanent formidable array of Russia in Poland."

If M. de Pobiedonotseff, the learned Procurator General of the Holy Synod, was right in saying: "The principal function of power is to choose men who are best fitted for their work," one may venture to inquire whether William II. has filled the bill by choosing for the most part mediocrities. Those who have lasted longest are not the Ministers of to-day who are freest from the charge of being tiresome. For example, take the Finance Minister.

When Herr von Miquel was last dismissed, his place at the Treasury was filled by Count von Crailsheim, an excellent administrator of Bavarian finances, whose call to fill one of the most important posts in the Empire was a trifle sudden. Since the beginning of the reign of William II., the Imperial debt, which, it should be remembered, does not include the Prussian nor those of the Federated States, has been increased by two million marks. For several years the surplus in the budgets has been replaced by annual deficits which have sometimes even reached one hundred million. New and unpopular taxes have been levied on beer, tobacco, and incomes, while certain economists attributed to the slightly blundering administration of Herr von Miquel, and to the carelessness with which he defended his annual budgets, the constant depreciation of German

and Prussian Consolidated loans, which have even fallen below our own three per cents. The bourses of Berlin and Frankfort, which, twenty years ago, were considered the most active on the Continent, have to-day yielded the palm to those of New York, London, and Paris. And William II., who if he has not all the merits, at least has that of paying attention to his critics, especially those who are justified, seems to have held his Minister severely to account for the deplorable results of an administration which public opinion, in all positiveness, should place at his own doors.

Why did William II. choose a Bavarian to succeed Herr von Miquel? Some would see in this unexpected act a mark of tardy deference toward the principal federal state of the Empire. Others have quite naturally thought that, without any forethought, he had recruited a commonplace financier. In either case, Herr von Crailsheim proceeds in a manner perplexing as it is encumbering, and very probably he will find himself in the presence of new demands for credits made necessary by the increasing army and will be less able to resist Imperial solicitations.

If there are in the German Empire certain persons who, more than others, are condemned to play various *rôles*, these are the generals. They have been turned into Chancellors, like Caprivi; into Ministers of Commerce and Public Works, like von Budde; into Ministers of Marine, like von Stokash; and into Ambassadors, like von Wedel. Indeed, it would seem that all attributes were reposed in the military. Unfortunately, they have not their master's omniscience.

General von Budde, the present Minister of Public Works, was responsible for an odd diversion in 1903. A few days before the last legislative elections, this astute soldier, lightly interpreting a hasty word of

William II., declared that he "like his Majesty was also indifferent as to whether all Government employees and workmen voted for the Socialists or not."

It was merely a joke, but all the papers took it up and commented on it in diverse manner. It was up to the Emperor to do something. He harshly rebuked the old officer, who was obliged to rectify matters by denying the exactness of the report of a phrase which he had actually uttered.

William II. treasured no anger against this old general. The former possesses, moreover, a certain quality which it would be unjust not to recognise. In spite of party attacks, he remains faithful to the collaborators he chooses, so long as they are not convicted of too grave errors. He turns quickly, however, on the luckless one when the blunder is sufficiently prodigious and notorious. He is inexorable towards the unfortunate fellow who has failed, and he lets him know it. He despatches to him an autographic letter of thanks, just as Sultans formerly sent the fatal silk cord to their condemned emirs.

For some little time past, the Kaiser has reserved to himself the appointment of his ambassadors. More and more his choice has fallen on aristocrats, on the great noblemen of fine and correct manners—persons of little initiative but wealthy enough to give elegant entertainments in foreign capitals on the anniversaries of his Majesty's birth. An Embassy is the coin in which the Emperor discharges the debt for services rendered. It also offers him the means by which he can utilise certain personages whom he has not seen his way clear to engage in the difficult field of internal politics. It was thus, for example, that a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron von Marschall, was made Ambassador at Constantinople. The post is

highly prized in Berlin, not only on account of the recent Turko-German *rapprochement* and the acquired importance of German interests in the Orient, but also because of the situation of Constantinople at the junction of the two civilisations, Christian and Arabic, and those curious pastimes which have official recognition with the Grand Turk and his beautiful Oriental Fatimas.

Prince Radolin, a Teutonised Pole, whose wife is related to Murat, was judiciously chosen to take the place at Paris of the respectable Prince von Münster. At London, it is a Metternich, a young diplomat with a great name, who has been chosen to interpret the ill-defined policies of his master.

In the United States, Herr von Holbein was greatly appreciated by the Emperor. At the time of Prince Henry of Prussia's visit to New York, the Rhenish press praised the jovial courtesy of this portly man who had familiarly tendered his broad back to Prince Henry for a desk, when the latter, in the midst of his reception to President Roosevelt on board the *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, indited a congratulatory despatch to his brother in Berlin. Since then, however, Herr von Holbein has been replaced. He was held strictly to account for an incident for which, however, he was not responsible. The dedication of the statue of Frederick the Great in one of the Parks of Washington was irrevocably put off simply because the American Cabinet so decided. This decision was dictated by the most perfect appreciation of the fitness of things. On account of the Venezuela affair, American sympathy for Germany was cooling off. Advance notices of the ceremony had been singularly protracted. Had not even the excuse for such a function about disappeared?

The Emperor was extremely mortified at the refusal

of the Americans to become excited over the great Frederick. He thought no longer of Venezuela and the ridiculous manœuvres of the German ships off American coasts.

And now a word on one of the most symptomatical faults in the Kaiser's make-up. He knows no obstacles to his fancies. For him they never exist. If he realises that he has committed a personal blunder he never sees it revealed in all its enormity. He imagines that a word, a courtesy, a turn of the head, a smile are sufficient to consign it to oblivion; and, since he does not remember it (he was never blessed with a long memory) he is actually astonished, to find that it continues to be retained in brains so badly organised that they do not imitate him.

In dealing with certain contemporary celebrities, German or otherwise, the Emperor is very attentive. Whether for reasons of pure politics or possibly on account of a sudden admiration for certain men, works, or memories, he sends telegrams, indites letters, makes speeches, and holds conversations. Carnot, Canrobert, McKinley, Moltke, Jules Simon, Cecil Rhodes, possessed, in varying degrees, the gift of moving him.

On the death of Marshal Canrobert he sent this short note to Lieutenant de Navacelle, son-in-law of the old soldier:

"My Ambassador has just informed me of the death of Marshal Canrobert. I and my Guard deplore from the depths of our hearts the death of the valiant defender of St. Privat."

A certain generous irony appears in this message, when it is remembered that on August 16, 1870, in the ravines of St. Privat le Montagne and of St. Marie aux Chênes, Canrobert's corps annihilated the Royal Guard of Prussia.

The death of President McKinley, assassinated at the inauguration of the Buffalo Exposition, also moved him and he lauded "this noble son of the New World, stricken dead while carrying out the highest of duties —that of head of state."

Finally, according to him, "Carnot fell in honour, worthy of his great name, like a soldier on the battle-field."

This last is particularly fine. But certain carping critics may wonder whether the German Kaiser was really true to his convictions in celebrating the great name of the Carnots and its revolutionary origin.

Was it sincerity or diplomacy?

The catastrophe of St. Pierre de la Martinique also smote his imagination, and, in a telegram to the President of the French Republic, he insisted that the number of dead "almost equalled that of Pompei."

Besides these declarations or *imperatoria brevitas*, which are more or less dignified and almost devoid of bombast, there are others (unfortunately they are more numerous) in which appears a ridiculous grandiloquence.

While absent from Berlin, on April 25, 1891, he learned of the death of old General von Moltke. Immediately he sent to the officers of his military cabinet this telegram—ultimately destined, be it understood, for publication:

"Moltke is dead by an unfathomable command of God! I am overwhelmed by the blow. I have lost an army that I shall never be able to replace."

The aged Field Marshal was then in his ninety-third year. For some time he had been in a retreat which his glorious services had won for him. Everybody knows that the title which the President of the Committee for the Defence of the Empire had conferred on

him was purely honorary, and that not only could he no longer command the armies of Germany, but that, poor old somnolent fellow that he was, he was scarcely able to use his faculties, and with difficulty aroused himself when the Emperor came to see him.

Everybody who takes the trouble to compare the value of words with that of facts will be struck by the incongruity. The Kaiser was perfectly right, to be sure, in praising the old chief of the German General Staff, but a judicious and sincere man would have drafted the eulogy in other terms.

Experiences of life have not rendered William II. more circumspect. It would be too much to expect them to change the very fountain head of his temperament.

Ten years later (December 14, 1901) there again cropped up in him this curious craving to astonish and stupefy his hearers. It was some time after Marquis Ito, the Japanese statesman, had visited Berlin. A new envoy had just been accredited to the German capital from Japan. In receiving him, accompanied with his suite of little brown men, the Emperor, in a perfect constellation of crosses and medals, arose solemn and grave, and, dominating by his stature the miniature diplomats of Nippon, proclaimed the following:

"Say to your master, his Majesty, Emperor of Japan, that I consider Marquis Ito the Bismarck of the Far East! You may now retire."

The Japanese delegation, astounded, withdrew, not knowing whether to be pleased or dissatisfied with the reception.

Although the Emperor has slight taste for the Latin language, he uses it at times in his congratulatory telegrams. In his capacity as Charlemagne's successor, he is fond of showing, like "the great Charles," his

love for arts and letters. One day the historian Mommsen received from him the following macaronic telegram:

Theodoro Mommseno antiquitatum romanarum investigatori incomparabili, prætorii Saalburgensis fundamenta jaciens salutem dicit et gratias agit Guilelmus, Germanorum imperator.[1]

Naturally the aged historian could not do otherwise than reply in the language of Cicero:

Germanorum principi tam majestate quam humanitate, gratias agit antiquarius Lietzelburgensus.[2]

Professor Virchow, in Germany, Mr. Pierpont Morgan in America, and M. Waldeck-Rousseau, General Bonal, and M. Millerand, in France, are among those who have been particularly honoured by his Majesty in this way, on account of politics, science, or the art of war.

If one is to believe those recent declarations of Chancellor von Bülow in the Reichstag, William II. should have true esteem for M. Millerand, ex-Minister of Commerce in the Waldeck-Rousseau Cabinet. It is also related that the Emperor once wrote on the margin of a newspaper clipping, which concerned the sociological work of M. Millerand: "Oh, if we only had him!"

If the Emperor did have "him," instead of Wollmar or Auer, the Empire would neither be better nor worse off, and his Majesty would quickly discover that Socialists of all countries are about alike.

[1] "To Theodore Mommsen, the incomparable discoverer of Roman antiquities, William, Emperor of the Germans, delving among the foundations of the fortress of Saalburg, sends greeting and acknowledgment."

[2] "To the Prince of the Germans, great in majesty as well as in benevolence, the antiquarian of Leitzelburg sends acknowledgment."

CHAPTER V

WILLIAM II. AND THE POLES

IN order to reach the true value of the German Monarch and his acts, an account of his relations with the Poles is quite as necessary as that of his rupture with Bismarck. Moreover, an acquaintance with it is essential for all who would grasp the significance of Pan-Germanism and of that "Greater Germany" which has so frightened the French but which, in truth, is merely a bogey.

In the course of his long career of political oppression, Prince Bismarck was particularly hard on the Poles. They had, in his eyes, two unpardonable defects: their religion and their nationality. The author of the *Kulturkampf* coolly and deliberately exercised his tyranny over this unfortunate people. He exiled all suspicious persons, shut up the convents, drove away priests guilty of preaching in the Slavonic language, and even attempted to Germanise the very soil by buying up with gold 150,000 hectares of land in East Germany in order to give it to Prussian Protestants.

The Poles accepted the challenge. The Prussian Colonisation Commission was followed by the organisation of the Ziemski Bank destined to receive funds for the repurchasing of the lands sold to the Prussians. When the unexpected downfall of the powerful Minister occurred and for the time suspended hostilities, the

struggle between the Chancellor and Poland had already assumed large and romantic proportions.

At the beginning of his reign William II. saw in this persecution more or less bad politics, to say nothing of moral cowardice. Since he desired to make peace with Catholics he dreamed of winning the Poles by kindness.

By his order Chancellor von Caprivi discontinued the work of extermination. Bismarck became furious at once, and in his paper, the *Hamburg News*, denounced the peril brought about by the feebleness of his successor, and set about founding an anti-Polish union on the Eastern frontier, *Ost-Mark-Verein*, with the idea of "dispelling the Slavonic peril." Three men came to his support: Haussmann, son of a Berlin banker; Kennmann, a rich landed proprietor; and Tiedemann, president of the regency of Bromberg. Thanks to the initial letters of their names, H. K. T., the association, within which were gathered all the enemies of Poland, became known as the "Hakatistes."

In the meantime, the Poles had had the *naïveté* to cherish the sentiments of the Kaiser, and to believe them sincere and lasting—a perfectly excusable weakness among a people who, until then, had no friends in the Empire,—and they made the great mistake of promising more than they could carry out.

In 1894 the relations between Herr Koscielki, one of the Polish members of the Reichstag, and William II. were most excellent. Koscielki had offered his Majesty the support of his countrymen for the Imperial project of increasing the German fleet, on condition that the Prussian Government should make important concessions to Poland especially in regard to the mixed instruction of Polish and German in the schools of Silesia and Posen. When the moment to vote came the Poles, either from the fact that the arrangement had not quite

been completed or owing to Koscielki's absence, were found to have left their seats, and William II. and his navy scheme lost the day. At the same time, the Polish paper, *Polentum*, began the war again against the *Deutschtum*. Some time after this in a speech delivered at Thorn, William II. expounded the new condition of his soul in regard to Poland in the following language:

"I know that the Poles are not what they should be in regard to the Empire. I expected from them entirely different conduct. May they learn in the future that they will not have my favour until they show themselves unconditionally my subjects."

This sudden change of the Imperial front coincided with the arrival of Count von Bülow in the chancellery and the reorganisation of the official staff in Posen.

War was thus renewed according to Bismarckian tactics, and this time William II. himself led the charge. His speech marked the advent of one of the most atrocious forms of moral persecution to which a people of three million souls has ever been subjected.

Who does not remember the boycott against the Polish shopkeepers, the Polish conscripts forbidden to answer their officers in their native tongue, the Polish language excluded from the schools, and the catechism taught in German by German priests to poor children who could not understand it? Who does not remember the domiciliary visits of the paid agents of the Prussian police to those students suspected of Polonism, the seizure of books written by Mickiewicz and Sienkiewicz, the Polish names of towns and villages changed to German, and finally, to crown this odious series of persecution, the young girls of Wreschen and Gnesen, beaten until the blood ran by the cruel German *Schulmeister*, under pretext that they had refused to speak

German? Mothers, who had made the mistake of going to the rescue of their children, were dragged before the tribunals of the King of Prussia and condemned to fine and imprisonment. Who can have forgotten those little girls of ten and eleven years, prosecuted on the charge of *lèse-majesté*, and of conspiring against the safety of the State, "simply because they had refused to receive a picture representing the Emperor," and, according to the complaint, by giving this refusal, "the character of malice aforethought."

These are but the events of yesterday, happening in a country imbued with Teutonic culture, and an account of them makes strange reading for the twentieth century.[1]

It is hardly necessary to recall the profound sensation created throughout Europe by these unheard of measures, the barbarity of which would have done credit to darkest Africa, or to speak of that eloquent protestation of Henrik Sienkiewicz addressed to the Cracovian Czars, accusing the Imperial administration of "crimes, violence, treason, of tyranny toward the weak, of disdain toward the strong, of lies, perjury, hypocrisy, and duplicity." One remembers, too, those subscription lists circulated in Austrian and Russian Poland, at the head of which appeared the well-known names of the former governor of Galicia, the rector of the University of Lemberg, the consul of Prague, etc.

One cannot forget these things any more than those violent attacks on Count Goluchowski and the Galicians, faithful supporters of the Austro-German alliance, and how those attacks stimulated disorder in Austria. The German consulate at Lemberg was threatened by bands of infuriated students, who at their enthusiastic meetings "excluded Prussia from

[1] The Gnesen affair was in October, 1901.

the family of nations." And, to cap the climax, Emperor Francis Joseph had, in all bitterness, to present his official excuses to the German Ambassador, Prince von Eulenburg.

As was natural and customary, the *North German Gazette* published arguments in defence of the Emperor's policy, all of which may be summed up in the following remarkable statement:

"Not only," said the *communiqué*, "do Polish pupils refrain from learning German, but German pupils are becoming Polish!"

These are certainly disastrous results for the Pan-German scheme, but why were they not combated with gentleness and reason? Why was it deemed necessary to employ coercive measures which were, at the same time, least effective and most questionable? The idea of arresting young girls, beating children, and prosecuting the mothers and daughters of a people simply because they preferred to speak one language rather than another! And what ghastly inconsistency it was to justify all such barbarities on the plea of "reasons of State!"

But the response was not long in coming. For a second time it emanated from the allied people of Austria.

On December 30, 1901, the Galician Diet opened at Lemberg under the presidency of Count Podocki. In the name of the Poles of Austria, Prince Czartoriski read an indignant declaration which sounded, according to a Polish poet, "like Gabriel's trumpet announcing the resurrection of Poland's dead."

"Gentlemen," cried the Austrian Prince, "we have been and we are still a people. Although divided politically and territorially, our nation has not ceased to form an intellectual unity. Hence she solemnly resents

the persecutions at Wreschen — persecutions which have also been solemnly resented wherever the maxim 'might makes right' has not yet stifled all human sensibility. History will judge and God will judge according to history. But we, deeply wounded in feeling by the offence which our brothers have suffered, have only one answer to make which is worthy of a people conscious alike of its existence, its rights, and its duties. The answer is this: let us redouble our efforts and perseverance in the development of our moral, intellectual, and economic forces with the avowed intention of bringing into new life the Polish nation over which presumptuous conquerors believe they have placed a tomb-stone."

Thus it was that the little people declined to die. Their desperate resistance called forth curious astonishment in Berlin. And, for the second time, the *North German Gazette*, gave expression to the discontent of William II.

The official organ, after scoring in severe terms the interference of the Diet in the domestic affairs of Germany, declared that this hostile act would have deplorable consequences, first for the German Poles and later on for Austria herself. New persecutions then began to characterise the relations of the Prussian Government with the Poles, and, since Slavism boasted of its superiority over Germanism in Austria, Germanism itself did its best to profit by the embarrassment of the Austrian Government caused by the outspoken Poles. Without noticing the sharp representation made by Prince von Eulenburg to Count Goluchowski, Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the *Gazette* reproduced the angry remonstrances of the German Chancellor to Count von Szegeny, the Austrian Ambassador. Moreover, Herr von Bülow thought he

ought to defend, before the Prussian Landtag, his Majesty's policy on the plea of extenuating circumstances.

In referring to Prussia's educational system, the Chancellor said: "We do not refuse to accept the responsibility of what has happened. It was made necessary and was justified by Polish vanity and arrogance (*Polnischer Uebermuth*)."

Thus again we have the fable of the "Wolf and the Lamb" in all its primitive characteristics.

At the same time, the Chancellor very much wished to make concessions for the future, and he declared that "corporal punishment would no longer be employed in religious instruction."

What generosity! What humanity! And what an excellent idea such a concession gives of the Government, the politics, and the people that inspired it.

Herr von Bülow forgot to explain, however, why the Poles of Prussia should have received exceptional treatment. Why was the Imperial Government more exacting than those of Vienna and St. Petersburg, which permitted their Polish subjects to use their native language and allowed them to maintain their moral and racial unity?

In considering these things, is it astonishing that a nation, which was annexed to Prussia scarcely one hundred and fifty years ago, should revolt against a cruel policy of which the aim and end is Germanisation?

Herr von Bülow dodged the question by pretending that Prussia was a rough country "where the people ought to hammer or be hammered," which is the logic of a barbarian.

Is it right, however, that the Poles should always be the anvil and the Prussians the hammer, and is it necessary that Poland should become more and more a

country of "little garrisons," when Eastern Germany is already made to provide for all the troops that it can possibly support?

But, certain indulgent persons will say, was the Kaiser himself cognisant of the persecution of the Poles? Might he not have been ignorant of the unfortunate zeal with which his orders had been carried out? How can he be held responsible for the vituperate language of his Prime Minister or for the cruel acts of his blind agents?

Nevertheless responsible he is. It was he who led and who encouraged the anti-Polish movement. His speech made June 7, 1902, at a banquet in Marienburg, Western Prussia, is irrefutable proof of his culpability. This speech was delivered on the day following the introduction of a bill in the Landtag for the Germanisation of Prussian Poland. In these words William II. addressed the Chapter of Knights of the Teutonic Order, whom he was entertaining at the ancient castle of Marienburg:

"Several times I have had occasion to remark in this castle and, so to speak, in this very town, that the ancient city of Marienburg, situated as it is on the confines of the civilisation that expands to the east of the Vistula, should always remain as the sentinel on guard for our country. This city was not only the cradle of Christian culture, but she is and will continue to be the fortress of German attributes on the frontier. For Polish arrogance oppresses us more and more, and I am obliged to appeal to my people that they may be put on their guard against Polonism so that our commonweal may be protected from it. Here in Marienburg, I express the hope that all the brothers of the order of St. John will arise like one man, if I call on them to defend civilisation and German culture. To-day and

to-morrow, as in the past, we have to combat a common foe . . ."

There could be no possible doubt as to who this "foe" was, since Poland had been most categorically named. The sectarian "Hakatistes" read this harangue, and were greatly impressed with its exalted mysticism, and they bounded to their feet crying: "Let us march on to victory! The Emperor covers us with the mantle of his authority and power!"

In fighting the Poles, all arms seemed good to them; the more odious the calumny, the better they were pleased. Herr von Tiedemann, one of the leaders of Hakatism, even went so far as to pretend that the revolt of the Poles against the Polish language was subsidised from abroad. "Money," vociferated this ferocious Prussian, "has been sent from Russia and France."

He forgot to mention Austria.

An indignation which found an echo in the Austrian Reichsrath followed the reading of the Kaiser's speech in the political circles of the three Polands, and among the Czechs, Slavonians, and all the Slavonic peoples under the dominion of Francis Joseph. A Czech deputy held the German Kaiser himself to account: "This verbose monarch," he dared to declare in the face of the Pan-Germans, "has this time placed himself at the head of the Pan-German propaganda, and has employed expressions which, hitherto, have only emanated from the mouths of professional agitators. If an ordinary man had spoken of the insolence of Poles and of the arrogance of Sarmatians, we would merely shrug our shoulders and consider that he was lacking in breeding. But when it is a Monarch who speaks, a Monarch at the head of an Empire which includes more than fifty million people, the representative of a dynasty in whose

behalf Polish blood was poured out on the fields of Gravelotte and Sedan—when such a Prince speaks in such a manner, does not he himself stand for a stupendous example of insolence and vanity? Are we not right in concluding that the German Emperor has revealed himself to the world, not only as a Pan-German fanatic, but as a creature really lacking in human sensibility as well as in political tact?"

These severe words let loose a storm in the Vienna Parliament. Pan-Germans, led by Schoernerer and Wolff, shouted: "Long live the Hohenzollerns!" The Czechs answered them with cries of: "Down with William II." To put an end to the row the president was obliged to adjourn the sitting. And next day, Herr von Köber, then President of the Austrian Ministerial Council, publicly expressed his regrets at the deplorable incident.

One might suppose that this time the German Government would have stopped to reflect a little. Those who think so are not well acquainted with it. The truth is that having committed an error, it became intoxicated with it, and persevered in it. One influential paper, the *Francfurter Zeitung*, alone, seemed to be disturbed:

"Hold on you impetuous fellows! Up to the present time the Poles of Austria have constituted one of the most solid supports of the foreign policy of Austro-Hungary, which, as you very well know, rests on the Triple Alliance. This attitude has been confirmed by the fact that a Pole has been regularly appointed President of the Austrian delegation. But this year, the Pole Jaworski has declined to accept the presidency in order that he may more freely criticise the foreign policy of the Empire, and he has measurably employed this privilege in a hostile manner toward Germany, by

alluding to the Wreschen incidents and to the foreign policy of Germany."

This attitude of the paper may be explained, not only by the arrogant speech of William II., but also on account of mischievous German agents at Illwitz, who were hastening the calling of an Ostmarkenverein Congress calculated to accelerate the Germanisation of the Polish districts of Posen and Western Prussia.

The protest of the Austrian Poles was not an isolated action. Two months after the Marienburg speech, their Prussian brothers celebrated with fine enthusiasm the anniversary of the battle of Tannenberg, in which, in 1410, their ancestors had inflicted a bloody defeat on the Order of Teutonic Knights. The municipalities of Gnesen, Posen, Thorn, Breslau, and Königsberg marched by the bust of the victor, Ladislas Jagellon, singing the national anthem: *Boza Cos Polski!* ("No, Poland is not dead!"). In Galicia, on the other side of the frontier, the annual congress of Polish school-teachers held at Lemberg, closed their business with an unanimous resolution protesting against the Marienburg speech, eulogising the memory of King Jagellon, victor of Prussia at Grunswald and Tannenberg, and honouring the Polish children of Posen for their persecution and martyrdom in a most holy cause.

If Emperor William II. were in reality what he has so often affected to be, that is to say, a sovereign always accessible to complaints and protests, a knight errant, ready to place his sword and his influence and his honour at the service of the down-trodden, what might he not have accomplished for the cause of Poland? From the fact that he opposed Bismarck, he was at the beginning inclined to a course of concessions and goodwill. An utterly honest and loyal man would have

continued in the way begun. It would have opened to him a superb vista of political advantages.

Who will deny that the Poles would have been grateful to a powerful Emperor who, while apparently working contrary to the interests of Prussia, had favoured their intellectual and economical development? Who knows whether Prussian Poland, as the happiest and most progressive of the three, might not have drawn the other two into a moral alliance of common sympathies and aspirations against Russia?

For the day will come when the Great White Czar, having completed his network of railways and telegraphs, will be able, at short notice, to mobilise his armies, and it is then that he will bear down with all his weight upon haughty and improvident Germany which the Kaiser has fashioned after his own image. Sooner or later, when that time comes, if William II. be still in this world, he may repent of having created in his Empire, by sheer force of political antagonism, an entangling network of hatred.

No one will attempt to defend him on account of considerations of political expediency. Nor can it be said that Germany, bent on realising its unity, ought to smash all obstacles, and that the Poles, forming a little state within the great nation, should be overcome and absorbed either by their own wish or by force.

It was not this sentiment—which, however, was the principle on which Bismarck worked—that inspired the Emperor. It was his mortification in not having obtained instantly and with a smile what his infantile vanity expected. It was also something deeper still, something instinctive in a sovereign who, in thinking of Sadowa and of 1870, imagined that Victory had nursed and nourished him with her enflaming milk.

It was the mortification of the impotent, of the vanquished. It was an utter absence of all delicacy and generosity, which has never been better revealed than by his unworthy conduct toward President Krüger.

When, on behalf of his country, this wandering old man solicited an audience with the German Emperor, the internal destinies of Germany were not in question. But Krüger was a defeated man; one might almost suppose that his failure had also deprived him of the right to seek an audience.

A defence so heroic that modern times offer no parallel to it had imbued him with the hope, on his triumphal entry into Berlin, that he might be received by William II. But the old man was very soon forced to see that he must abandon this audience which he had hoped so much to obtain in the interests of his people. The Kaiser disdainfully refused to receive Krüger, the proscribed.

And he, who treated the old man thus, was the same Emperor, who, five years before, had sent him a sensational telegram, congratulating him on having defeated and captured the raiders of the English Jameson. But then Krüger was a victor, who might hope to found the United States of South Africa. In 1901 he was a fugitive. *Væ victis!* Woe to all the vanquished Polands.

In order to excuse this semi-cowardice, one might argue that the Kaiser could not afford to affront England. But that does not hold water. France, who was just then emerging from the humiliation of the Fashoda episode, was, on account of her numerous colonies, much more vulnerable to English blows; but did she hesitate a single instant to receive with her best the broken and defeated man, and to honour, in his person, the courage of his unfortunate compatriots?

Did not the President of the French Republic officially return his visit at the Hotel Scribe?

Which by her attitude has been benefited more — France or Germany? Is it not our country? Far from taking us to task for this act of hospitality, England has been the first to renew cordial relations with us. All the same, Krüger was not permitted to entertain any delusions in regard to his mission. On the other hand, what advantage has Germany gained by her curious conduct?

Where are they, the allies of Waterloo?

Moral defects are greatest in politics, but it takes time to bring them to the surface. Since 1888, William II. has tricked many persons, but little by little the truth has become known, and when this Gerolstein potentate finishes singing: "Behold the sword, the sword of my father, of my grandfather, of my indomitable grandsire, the sword of my ancestors, of Charlemagne," and retires into the flies, and one comes to examine that formidable and sacred blade, one is stupefied to discover that the invincible knight has merely a harlequin's lathe in his hand.

In the battle in which he wished to lead his fifty millions against the little people of Kosciusko, who was defeated?

At the last Reichstag elections those Polish candidates who were considered too weak-kneed by their committees were requested to withdraw, and their places were filled by candidates pledged to a policy of protest. Better still, Polish deputies who in the late Reichstag had only a representation of fourteen now returned seventeen. Three seats were won from the Conservatives in Silesia. The Polish vote has increased from 244,000, in 1898, to 357,000, in 1903. At one time, it was even feared that the President of the

Reichstag, Herr von Ballestem, would be beaten by a Pole in the Liegnitz district. And what is almost incredible, the Polish candidates obtained between seven and eight thousand votes in the minor districts of Westphalia, where there are to-day genuine Slav colonies.

William II. has therefore been stranded in his Polish policy. Indeed, the Teutonic element in East Germany has fallen off. Of the ten thousand German families settled there, at great expense, by the Commissioners of Colonisation, there remain only four thousand.[1] And a day will come, and that day is near, when the Poles will have completely bought up the lands from which the Government wished to remove them at the expense of millions of marks. Before long the Polish element will have pushed its advance posts as far as Fraustad-Lissa, half-way between Berlin and the Russian frontier. And, unless a quite unlikely revival among the Prussians takes place, the latter's agriculture will, ere long, pass into Polish hands, for, if the German farmer goes to live in the towns or departs for foreign lands, the Pole remains, indigenous to the soil.

In a word, Polish grit and push have triumphed over German resistance. Lilliput has beaten Gulliver.

[1] See *Die Polenfrage*, by Dr. Stumpfe, Berlin, 1902.

CHAPTER VI

WILLIAM II. AND SOCIALISM

THERE is not the slightest doubt that, on his accession to the throne, William II. dreamed of establishing cordial relations with socialism and democracy, and that he nourished the idea of a sort of socialistic empire in which the grievances of workingmen and their employers would be submitted to him for arbitration.

He imagined that he could play, at least in theory, the *rôle* of the wise law-givers of ancient Greece and reform the tribunals of society.

We have seen how his quarrel with Bismarck, emanating from problems of international policy, reached its climax through their personal differences concerning social politics.

At that time, William II. had said: "Any one of my subjects who has a wish to express or a petition to have granted has the ear of his Emperor."

What a touching expression! But the Chancellor, looking at things from a narrower point of view, was far from admitting that workingmen, syndicates, and co-operated associations had a right to monopolise the Imperial attention, complicate affairs of State, and some day, by their demands, dominate public life. On the other hand, William II., young, eager, and presumptuous, liked to make his individuality felt everywhere

and imagined that employers and employees could subsist and be nourished on the mere charm of his words —words for which they had been waiting so long like a new manifestation from some messiah.

His friendship and correspondence with Parson Stöcker did much to stimulate this idea, for Stöcker, before Misfortune laid her hand upon him, had familiar access to the Court where he preached a sort of Christian Socialism.

At the very beginning of his reign, an event occurred which enabled William II. to apply his theory at once. Extensive strikes had broken out at the coal mines in the basin of the Ruhr, and the Kaiser thought that here was his opportunity. He would converse with the delegations of proprietors on one day and with those of the workmen on the next.

Unfortunately, he did not attempt to get at the basis of the grievances or discuss the wages paid, the hours of work, or the complications arising from daily toil. On the contrary, he confined himself to somewhat vague generalities after the following manner:

"Gentlemen Proprietors of the Mines: I beg of you, permit the workingmen to lay their desires before you in the frankest manner"; or again, "It is your duty, gentlemen, you who have in your service so many of the subjects of my Empire, always to bear in mind the welfare of the workingman"; or still again, "You know that the workingmen read the papers and that they are perfectly well aware as to how their wages stand in comparison with the dividends of the company."

The only interesting point which is concealed in this void of aphorisms is a certain tendency to encourage the participation of the toiler in the profits of the master; but even this can hardly be called an innovation.

He recommended the workingmen to be true to their contracts and to refrain from baiting their comrades who, preferring to stick peacefully to their work did not wish to go on strike; and finally, he advised them to shut their ears against Socialist demagogues, whom he already looked upon in the light of enemies to Empire and Country (*Reichs und Vaterlands Feind*). All this was rather tame advice; but, at the same time, it is worth while noticing that at that date (May, 1889) the Kaiser seemed to admit, at least by implication, the right of strike, which fact curiously clashes with the ideas he then held for his scheme of social tribunals.

Also, it is worth while to recall the international labour conference which came together on the Kaiser's invitation in Berlin, and in which M. Jules Simon appeared as a delegate from France, and the not less famous "Edicts" for the protection of labour which had been published in the *Monitor of the Empire* without the signature of Herr von Bismarck. But all this, according to the old Chancellor, who never knew how to varnish the truth, was merely "phraseology."

At first the Emperor had declared that he would not attend the international conference, but would be represented there by his exalted friend, Cardinal Kopp, the Prince Bishop of Breslau. This is at least what he had said in the pompous letter addressed to the sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII. Theatrical as ever, he had wished to demonstrate that he, the Kaiser, pope of reform, was not less progressive than the author of the celebrated encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, and that on the occasion of a congress of workingmen, he had graciously yielded his influence and place to a Roman Catholic prelate.

But whether owing to his curiosity to know more

intimately the distinguished foreigners who assembled in the main hall of the Reichstag, which had been placed at the disposition of the conference, or, because he hoped that his presence might give more colour or a more decisive character to the debates, the Kaiser changed his mind and was present at the sessions. According to Herr Deppe, *schlossmeister* of Madgeburg, who was at the congress as Imperial adviser, the Kaiser did not hesitate to speak himself, and even "to interrupt the orators when they went wrong" (*das Wort auch abzukürzen, wenn der Redner sich verirrte*).

On June 20, 1890, while on a visit to the Krupp gun-works at Essen he delivered an address to seven hundred workingmen:

"I have already proclaimed to the world," cried this indefatigable rhetorician, "the road which I will follow; and I now declare to you that I shall never depart from it."

But alas for the word of William II.! At the very beginning of 1891, he was lightly wending his way along a different path. Three facts seem to have inspired his journey: the misadventures of his friend, Pastor Stöcker; the uninterrupted progress of Socialism; and the opposition of the Conservatives and Agrarians.

Stöcker was a minister of heaven who did not disdain earthly things. Suddenly rumours questioning his morality were bruited about and the Opposition sheets, which had already begun to thrive, took a sorry pleasure in pointing out the intimacy which existed between this strayed sheep and his Majesty.

Then William II. broke the ties with much noise, and the Socialist-Christian Pastor quitted the Court. Then this very Kaiser who, in the person of Cardinal Kopp, had wished to identify the Church with de-

mocracy, suddenly discharged this severe and unexpected judgment at all priests with Socialistic-Christian tendencies:

"Political parsons are an absurdity. Whoever is a Christian is also a member of the social body, but this word Christian-Socialist means nothing, and leads the man who cherishes it to intolerance and pride — two things which are diametrically opposed to Christianity. Parsons ought to confine themselves to souls and to the calls of charity, but leave politics, of which they understand nothing, entirely alone."

Whatever one may think of the justice of this sentiment, it seems proper to inquire of William II. Why should priests and parsons refrain from politics, when Emperors mix themselves up with religion?

In proportion, as his reign continued, the Social Democrats recruited more and more adherents from the dismal Germanic formula. In spite of his exhortations and even of his threats, workingmen affiliated themselves with clubs and syndicates and began a terrible struggle against the idea of patronage and the principle of authority. Socialist papers in the Empire soon exceeded two hundred and counted more than five hundred thousand subscribers. Funds for the payment of campaigns, of fines, of elections, and for the elected—Reichstag deputies receive no salary—were established in all industrial centres. Results were not slow in coming. In 1893, thirty-nine Socialist deputies entered parliament. These represented 1,700,000 votes out of 7,500,000 cast, or twenty-three per cent. In 1898 they returned fifty-six, won by a vote of 2,100,000 out of 7,900,000 cast, or twenty-six per cent. In 1903 they had eighty-one deputies, representing a vote of 3,100,000, subtracted from 9,000,000 electors, or thirty-four per cent. For the past fifteen years the Socialist advance

has been constant and uninterrupted, and is likely to continue so.

In fact, the rising flood has even reached the steps of thrones. Already entire kingdoms, like Saxony, for example, have a representation very nearly completely Socialist (twenty-one out of twenty-two). Eleven of the greatest German cities—Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, Königsberg, Breslau, Frankfort-on-the-Main, Stettin, Dresden, Leipzig, Stuttgart, and Kiel, have elected none but Socialist candidates.

It may appear singular to some, in the light of the number of votes obtained by the Social Democrats—a third of the entire German electorate—that they have been only able to seat eighty-one deputies out of the 397 composing the membership of the Reichstag, when they ought, it would seem, to have 130 or 140. This result is due to a singular clause in the election law passed forty years ago by the Parliament of the old Federation of Northern Germany. This clause specifies that there shall be *one* deputy: I. In every state or principality having at least 100,000 inhabitants; II. For every portion of 100,000 in the large states, the Duchies, the Grand Duchies, the Principalities, and the Free Cities having together a population of 100,000. The most singular thing in the clause is a little postscript of two lines, which states that the number of deputies and the limitations of their districts, fixed *hic et nunc* according to the plan of 1867, can only be changed by the law of the Reichstag. Quite naturally, no such law has ever been presented by a Chancellor in the name of the Government, for it would modify, in favour of Social Democracy, the conditions in which deputies are elected. Large cities, like Berlin and Hamburg, for example, which should, in consideration of their population, respectively elect seventeen and

eight deputies, now seat six and three. At the last election, eight of these nine were Socialists.

In other centres similar paradoxes are presented. Munich, for example, which elects two deputies (two Socialists, by the way, one of whom is the celebrated von Wollmar, the German Jaurès or Millerand) should, by reason of its five hundred thousand population, return at least four.

When the day comes that the Socialists shall succeed in revising the election law, it will mean a revolution in the Reichstag.

It should be remembered that in Germany, as elsewhere in Europe, the cities are gaining people at the expense of the country. Thus the rural districts, whether Catholic, as in Bavaria, or Conservative, as in Prussia, are now what they have always been. Thanks to the annual excess of births over deaths, these districts have maintained their same totals, in spite of the rural exodus to the cities, but in a proportion infinitely smaller than the cities; and they have barely been able to preserve their quota of deputies given them by the law of 1867. That is why the country districts to-day continue to hold a majority in the Reichstag, while, politically speaking, the towns have not benefited by their increased population.

A revision of the election law, which would change this state of things, does not seem near. The very idea of such a law has against it the Emperor, the Conservatives, the cause of Empire, the Centre and even certain liberal factions which, conscious of their united power, will make no concessions to the Socialist party unless threatened by a violent revolution. They would even hesitate before such a threat, for the result of this new law would mean a revolution much more effective and lasting than could be achieved by any German

Eighty-nine,[1] which would come to grief drowned in blood by the grenadiers of the King of Prussia.

This would certainly happen, unless, indeed, the army, also divided by the Socialist propaganda and freed from all restraint and discipline, should turn against itself at the propitious moment.

The monomania of William II. to pose as the arbiter of parties and his conviction that he had received at his birth the gift of omniscience have, more than once, placed him in a difficult position in regard to labour problems. On one occasion his idiosyncrasy of intervention was accepted at his own value and—must one confess it? — the Berlin Pico de la Mirandola became the most mortified monarch in the world.

The Kaiser believes himself to be a political economist of unerring judgment, but he has been led quite astray in the dispute between protectionists and free-traders, which is still going on in Germany.

In order to understand this somewhat important question concerning the commercial treaties, which threatens the very foundations of political Germany and furnishes the Socialists with the opportunity of blaming the Kaiser for the accompanying misfortunes, it is necessary to know something of the status of the two factions, which have joined swords over the tariff question.

The protectionists are the rural landed proprietors, especially those of East Germany and Prussia and of Danubian and Rhenish Bavaria, who would like to see the highest duties levied on cereals, cattle, and all foreign agricultural commodities, which for some time past, have rivalled native products in the interior markets of Germany. The name of Agrarian has been

[1] A French Revolution.—TRANSLATOR.

applied to them. Their leader is Count Kanitz and they constitute, according to Caprivi's description, "a party small in numbers but large in strength"—especially if we take into consideration the names of the great lords, counts, and dukes whom they have at their head. Around them gravitate what may be called "the bashful Agrarians," or the Catholics of the Centre, representing the rural districts of Southern and Western Germany, and the Liberal Radicals of the *Suddeutsche* party, etc.

Their antagonists, the free-traders, among whom are the Socialists who have always advocated cheap living, the National Liberals, and the progressive factions of Barth and Richter, demand a revision of commercial treaties on a basis favourable for the exchange of agricultural products, or, at least, for the protection of German manufactories which they say "have become much more interesting than farming."

The Agrarians complain that their existence has been one long series of sacrifices and disappointments. To them had been promised the famous Elbe-Oder canal, which would have enabled them to land their agricultural products on the markets of Westphalia, an industrial province of extensive consumption, and to come into victorious competition with foreign farming commodities in the markets along the valley of the Rhine. In spite of the fact that the scheme had Imperial backing, they failed to secure this famous "Central Canal," the estimated cost of which, 300,000,000 marks, was deemed a price too heavy for the finances of the Empire.

In altogether categorical terms, the Agrarians summon the Kaiser to their support:

"Not only," they say, "are we the party of the Crown and Empire, the clan of old, conservative ideas,

but we are monarchists and advocates of an infinite increase of the German army, of *your* army, and they are our sons, country gentlemen, *junkers*, who make up the great majority of your officers and who serve to instruct and to ornament these formidable legions which shall ever remain devoted to the service of your Majesty, especially as our sons will continue faithful to it; and they will always be able, thanks to their carefully guarded incomes, to defray the enormous expenses of keeping up their rank in accordance with the best German military traditions. For our incomes are derived exclusively from the soil, from the land. But if you do not stem the tide that is flowing toward the cities, and encourage the sale of the products of our farmers, how can the latter assure us the rent of their farms? And finally, if you permit foreign commodities to enter our own particular markets in disastrous competition with the products of our own farmers, is not the ruin of German agriculture in sight, and, consequently, our own?"

The free-traders sound their song in a different key.

"Oh, Majesty," they cry, "we are the party for naval extension, for the augmentation of commerce and world-politics, which are so dear to your heart. We have voted for all your naval and colonial schemes; we supported the intervention of the army in China, and we seconded your animated dispute with America apropos of Venezuelan insolvency. In your turn, you cannot abandon us in the terrible industrial crisis through which we are now passing. What we need is open markets. Do not close them to us and thus provoke retaliation against us by a policy of high protection. If you increase by anti-liberal measures the price of the necessaries of life, you are going to arouse deep discontent among the masses of the middle-class and the

workingmen—among forty million men. So far you have done nothing but evade the question. The Socialists make capital out of your hesitation. They say that you are not the friend of the 'hardened hands of toil.' They describe you as a prisoner of the Agrarian crowd. Oh, Sire, pray hasten to grant us commercial treaties, which, while permitting the importation of foreign agricultural commodities, will lower the cost of living and facilitate exportation—the easy flow of our irons, our steel, our drugs and chemicals, and all our cheapest commodities. Sire, we are now toiling at a loss, just managing to hold our customers, but we cannot keep it up much longer."

The question was, how to conciliate the *desiderata* of both parties. Count von Bülow, inspired by his august master, attempted this difficult task. After a first reading and an unprecedented obstruction, he forced through a bill which satisfied no one, because it had been drawn to please all.

The protectionists have thereby obtained certain protective duties which they had demanded. But it remains to be seen how foreign countries like Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and the United States will endure duties on their wheat, cattle, and wine which will practically shut out these products from Prussian ports. Will they not take it out by placing a similar burden on the back of German industries?

Although the free-traders have obtained more than the Agrarians, they are less satisfied with the state of uncertainty which surrounds the possible action of foreign powers in regard to German industries. Moreover, the cost of living has measurably advanced. Workingmen have become more troublesome and have demanded higher wages. And, if the industrial proprietors refuse to grant them, will not the Socialists

profit by the occasion to provoke strikes, create trouble, attack the Emperor and the Empire, and generally upset the present state of things?

These are the prodigious problems which William II. attempted to solve and the solution of which has eluded him, although, with his ordinary presumption, he imagined that he could set everything right by so many words. Flattery and threats alike have failed. When brought face to face with the Social Democrats he has always lacked the firmness of his boasts. His extravagance of speech and action, his bravado could hardly have failed to serve the cause of democracy. He always begins with the Social Democrats by saying: "Let us embrace!" But at the first cloud on the horizon he talks of strangling them.

In examining the principal causes of his Majesty's intermittent coldness towards his sometime friends, the Socialists, it is interesting to note what individuals have served to influence him. In private life the Kaiser has had as friends two eminent captains of industry—Herr Ballin, the well-known director of the Hamburg-American Line, and Alfred Krupp, whose intimacy with the Emperor is worth a few details.

The friendship of William II. for Krupp may be thus accounted for. The famous maker of cannon at Essen was historically the official purveyor, so to speak, of German artillery, and he won this distinction by the success of the German guns on the battlefields of France. Notwithstanding this, however, the Emperor has several times been disappointed with the Krupp brand, especially apropos of the rapid-fire gun, calibre 1896, which was intended to be superior to everything that the foreign powers and especially France might put forth for some years to come. According to the generals of artillery installed at Essen, it was

a marvel of perfection in range, rapidity of fire, and accuracy.

We know how France answered these boasts of a superior article by the adoption of the Deport gun which, on account of its lack of recoil and large angle of projection, was as superior to the Krupp of '96 as the new German gun itself was ahead of all preceding types.

But whom did the Emperor blame for the mortification he suffered? Whom did he hold responsible for the failure, Krupp or himself? Neither. The guilty party, according to the Kaiser's august judgment, was General von Gösseler, who paid with his post the error committed by another.

From a financial point of view the consequences of this error were very serious. They necessitated an immediate recasting of the defective guns if not even the adoption of a different type. The expense is now rapidly jumping from one hundred to one hundred and fifty million marks. Whatever happens, however, the Emperor will remain faithful to the Essen establishment, which will certainly receive all future orders.

People have pretended that the great captain of industry who left a fortune—some say of 3,000,000,000 marks—had in the course of his life rendered the Emperor certain services which would hardly bear looking into. This is not at all unlikely; but, in any event, every time that the Emperor went to Essen they gave him a reception which was never equalled except by those tendered him by the Grand Dukes, the Princes, or the Kings of the Federation. On those occasions the workmen had a holiday on condition that they ranged themselves along the streets through which the Imperial cortège would pass. The day was always brought to a close with free drinks served at the

taverns and saloons and with presents for the children. And this enthusiasm, by order, gave the Kaiser the illusion of a manufacturing city of fifty thousand toilers, moving in perfect accord at the beck and call of an ideal master.

The reality of this illusion as we shall see was less brilliant. The truth is that Krupp was not beloved by his employees, although he had built for them free dwellings in the outskirts of Essen. The work was harder and the hours longer than those obtaining in similar establishments in England or America.

The German workingman is long-suffering and loath to insist on his claims. He is slow to take action, and, like the soldier described by Eugène Scribe, he knows how "to be silent without a murmur." But this silence is deceptive. A day comes when his pent-up feelings burst forth with volcanic violence. On several occasions strikes at Essen have been suffocated at their birth by convenient concessions, and the establishment has reverted to its accustomed tranquillity. All this has made a deep impression on the Kaiser, who is firmly convinced that Alfred Krupp found a happy solution for the labour problem.

Bearing these things in mind, it is not difficult to account for the anger his Majesty displayed when the Socialist organ *Vorwärts* attacked the private life of Krupp and commented on the suicide of this eminent gunmaker (for no one in Germany to-day swallows the story that his passing was due to an attack of apoplexy) and gave special publicity to certain documents bearing upon Krupp's holidays passed on the island of Capri, which had been sent to the paper by the workingmen of Essen.

The Emperor was rudely disillusioned, and, as usual, his disillusionment found expression in an explosion of

wrath. Instead of making any attempt to discover whether or not the stories had any foundation in fact, he instituted a series of prosecutions against the Socialist organ which were later abandoned at the request of the family of the deceased, and he went to Essen and attended the funeral of his friend, and delivered there a speech which is well worth reproducing. Nothing better illustrates the high pitch of his impolitic and infantile exasperation against Social Democrats.

He had the entire Krupp force, together with labour delegates, assembled in a hall near the Essen railway station, and, on the threshold of his remarks, he took occasion to emphasise the bonds of friendship which united his house with that of Krupp; then he said:

" Certain circumstances which have accompanied this sad event have moved me, as the superior officer of the dead man, to come here at this time. He is the victim of his invulnerable integrity. . . . A vile and infamous act has just been committed in this German land. It makes all hearts sick and brings the blush to every patriotic German cheek before such an outrage inflicted on the entire German nation. This act, with its consequences, is nothing less than an assassination. There is nothing to choose between a criminal who stabs his victim with a poisoned dagger and the man who, in the safety of the editorial sanctum, riddles his enemy with deadly arrows thereby depriving him of the honour of a name until then respected and finishes by killing him by moral tortures which are inflicted in the most frightful manner. Who are these men who have perpetrated this infamy against our friend? They are men who considered themselves Germans, and yet, today, they are unworthy of the name. They are men who came from that class of the population which owes so much to Krupp and from which there are thousands

assembled to-day in the streets of Essen, who have come to bid a lasting farewell to their benefactor."

And the Kaiser rammed home this further sentiment by addressing the listening workingmen in still more intimate terms:

"Those men who pretend to be the leaders of German workingmen have stolen from you your beloved master. It is for you to protect his honour and defend his memory against outrage. I am certain that you will find a means to convince the German working class of the truth, for I am convinced that there is nothing in common between the authors of this odious act and the loyal and honest toilers, whose arms have been tarnished.

"Whoever does not sever all relation with the odious malefactors must assume the responsibility of a certain moral complicity in their deeds. I have faith in the workingmen of Germany; I believe that they are equal to the present serious contingency; and that, like true Germans, they will find an answer to this serious question."

Now what was the meaning of these eloquent periods? Let us first look at them in the light of impartial testimony deduced from established facts. Was it true or not that Krupp could be considered reasonably culpable of moral shortcomings? We must believe that he was, since his family caused the prosecution of his accusers to be dropped and since Italian and Austrian papers cited names and gave, concerning the Capri episode, certain precise details, which can hardly be considered advantageous to Teutonic purity.

In plunging into the breach, therefore, the Kaiser betrayed a somewhat wild imprudence. For the sake of argument, however, let us admit that Alfred Krupp was a paragon of virtue. What is then the meaning

of the Kaiser's sentimental harangue? Is his the language of a head of State, honouring the memory of a manufacturer, who had been the builder of the military force of the Empire? A moderately wise man would not thus, in a funeral oration, have hazarded an attack upon the press and political parties. Before the coffin, he would have known how to have risen above petty human conventions and would have sounded the note for national mourning in honour of the deceased and in praise of his achievements and would have completely ignored the calumnies which were intended to detract from the worthiness of the departed. But even if it had seemed proper to emerge from that silence which is usually the only answer to calumny, he could have expressed himself in a few noble and judicious phrases entirely free from all sensational taint. William II., on the contrary, thought it meet to unsheath his "invincible sword" before the body of the dead Krupp and to beat the air with the blade, and we see him brandishing the thunderbolts of his "iron energy"—a sword of wood accompanied with stage thunder!

Still the Kaiser was not through and, later, in the course of a trip to Breslau, he reverted to this subject which he seems to have so very much at heart.

On receiving a labour delegation he took occasion to set forth that the German monarchy was not behind the most advanced republics in what pertained to the welfare of the workingman. He reminded his hearers that Germany was among those rare countries which had practically organised homes for workingmen.

"The labouring class," added William II., "has always been the object of my interest and of my solicitude, and I have noted, not without a certain pride when abroad, that the German workingman is more highly respected than all, and justly so. The social

legislation introduced by the great Emperor William I. and continued by myself assures to the workingman comfort and ease in his old age. This has been brought about by sacrifices which have often weighed very heavily upon employers. And our Germany is the only country in which legislation has exercised a care over the property of the working classes. On account of this enormous solicitude, to which your kings have always borne witness, I have a right to enlighten you and to appeal to you. For several years, you and your brother Germans have lent ear to the words of Socialist agitators who have informed you that unless you joined their party you would not be well thought of and would never have your just grievances heard, nor would your position be ameliorated. That is a serious error; it is a prodigious falsehood! Instead of defending your interests, these agitators seek to excite you, not only against your employers, but against other social classes and against even the throne and the altar; and, at the same time, they have exploited you, have terrorised and oppressed you without pity in order to strengthen their own power. What is their aim? Certainly not to assure your welfare, but to sow the seeds of hate against social classes and to launch cowardly calumnies, which respect nothing that is sacred and which finally tarnish that which we most revere here below, a German's honour. If there still remains to you any love for that honour, you will henceforth have nothing to do with such men; surely you can no longer allow them to guide you. No indeed! Why will you not choose your friends and comrades from among yourselves? Pick out a simple working man, even one from the shop. Send him to parliament. Let him defend your interests and we will hasten to make him welcome as a representative of the German labouring class. But

leave all Socialism behind! And with such representatives as you will then have, whatever be their number, we will willingly work together for the common good of people and country."

These two speeches, one delivered at Essen and the other at Breslau, were printed together, and distributed among the great manufacturers that they might be put up on bulletin boards in the most important mills and factories. Quite naturally, all these attacks exasperated the Socialist deputies. If William II. took advantage of his rank as Emperor to assail them without danger to himself, they, in their turn, entrenched themselves behind parliamentary immunity, and there not only defended themselves, but vigorously attacked the person of the Emperor. With the exception of Belgium, in no country could one witness those scenes which took place in the German Reichstag. Calls to order actually rained down. The right to speak was withdrawn from the Socialist leaders. The President sent in his resignation. There was general tumult. But the Socialists had taken it into their heads to give the Kaiser his due and nothing could prevent them.

"I estimate," declared the venerable Bebel, deputy from the first district of Hamburg, "that every speech that the Kaiser makes is worth to us one hundred thousand votes."

What delightful irony! And the chief of the irreconcilable Socialists went on to denounce the fact that, everywhere in Germany, workingmen were obliged to sign addresses to the Kaiser, drafted by their employers, and that those who refused to associate themselves with these manifestoes were discharged.

Now are such statements true? One can only say that certain papers, which had absolutely no affiliations with the Socialists, have described an incident at

Stettin, which curiously bears out Herr Bebel's charges. Sixteen hundred operators employed in a factory had been forced to sign a message of loyalty addressed to the Emperor after his speech at Essen. A few days later the same workmen sent to William II. a new telegram in which they declared that they had never been in sympathy with him or his work and that they had simply signed the first message because, being fathers of families, they feared to lose their jobs.

In order that nothing might be lacking in the oratorical manifestations of the Crown directed against Socialism, the Crown Prince, he who will be, *si fata sinant*, William III., congratulated the workingmen of the good town of Oels, "for having nothing in common with those miserable wretches who dared to soil the honour of a German gentleman." How very much that sounds like father! This expression of young Frederick William caused a painful impression in Germany, and the official press hastened to state that he had been misinterpreted. "The Crown Prince," it declared, "did not employ the expression *elenden* (miserable wretches), but the word *elementen* (elements)."

What wearisome ingenuity! However, the correction was far from pleasing his Majesty, who had possibly dictated the speech, and who, in any case, reiterated the original text.

It was then that a scene unfolded itself in the Reichstag which was absolutely without a precedent in German politics. People saw the Socialist Opportunist von Wollmar—not Bebel, or Singer, or Ledebour—but Wollmar in person, rush with indignation to the tribune and there, in spite of the desperate efforts of the President, launch an interpellation at the Government concerning the almost sacred personality of this son of Cæsar, and cry in a voice of thunder which, to the

members of the old Prussian Right, seemed to sound the knell of absolutism: "What does this young man want of us?"[1] A furor of applause shook the Reichstag; it grew in volume and only died away to begin again. By that single sarcastic phrase, uttered by the Bavarian Millerand, the Socialist benches arose *en masse*.

But, it may be asked, why did not the Kaiser, profiting by the discussions which, a year before, had sprung from the very heart of the Socialist body at the Dresden Congress, attempt some skilful manœuvre? Why did n't he offer a portfolio to Wollmar, or to Bernstein, or to Auer, so that on their acceptance all Germany would have seen Imperial Socialism (words harmonious by their very contrasts) leading the eagle of the Hohenzollerns toward new horizons?

Such an hypothesis would be perfectly reasonable if Bebel had not been there; but the old war-horse had a particular hatred for imperialism, and, however arbitrary he may be in his ideas, he has always maintained such influence over Democratic Germany that it would have been absolutely impossible for the 3,000,000 German Socialists to permit the rise of Wollmar to power under the guidance of William II.

In the following duel, fought out by Bebel and Wollmar, it was the Imperial Crown, the Empire, which was the fool's pawn, and least of any one was the Kaiser aware of it. At the present moment it is being borne away by Bebel. His triumph is overwhelming, for, at the Dresden Congress, out of the 320 Socialist delegates

[1] A curious coincidence: Bismarck called Emperor William II. "this young man"; Herr Lieber often designated him ironically as "this good young man"; and old President Krüger, when by any chance he happened to refer to him, spoke of him as "this poor young man."

present, hardly twenty gave their support to the clarified Socialism of Wollmar and Bernstein. The idea of a Socialist vice-president of the Reichstag, of a German Jaurès, in knee-breeches, paying his respects in the ante-chamber of the Palace at Potsdam, suggested curious complications for the protocol, and aroused in the Congress almost general disapproval. All the theoretical Socialists, who had this innovation in mind and defended it, had all their trouble for nothing. They were themselves obliged to vote against their scheme or lose the esteem and confidence of their party.

It may be said of the politics of William II. what the fabulist has said of floating sticks: "From afar it is something; near by, it is nothing."

An additional proof of this, one by no means the least significant, is his defeat in his struggle against Socialism.

If Bismarck were still living, and his Royal and Imperial master, forced to repentance, should come to him for advice, we may imagine the Chancellor replying in the following remorseless and brutal logic:

"Sire, your dream speeches have caused a great deal of trouble. Your greatest enemy was Socialism. Now, after a fifteen years' reign, you are reduced to groans and vituperation. In 1888, it was hardly necessary to make overtures to the Social Democrats, simply for the purpose of venting your spite on me. The most elementary common sense should have caused you to carry out silently the work of those reforms creating homes for workingmen, already admirably begun by the Crown, before your time and without any talk. Do you think that it is necessary to be for ever haranguing the people from the top of the throne? The Social Democrats take you for an impotent babbler. The

masses of the people respect only that force which waits upon reason and which manifests itself by performing deeds thought out in seclusion. Words amount to nothing if they are found to mean nothing when carefully and leisurely examined. You have invoked 'the perfumed zephyr of hope' spoken of in the old song, but it is the hurricane which will come.

"Before the unæsthetic impatience of your people, you should first of all shut up, and then reflect. And doubtless, in the course of your reflection, you would learn the futility of attempting to fool everybody, including yourself. Do you think that you would then say to yourself: 'I am going to interest my people by presenting them with the spectacle of a quivering yet universal genius of a master. People will admire me and see the Empire wax great in proportion to my spreading renown. Everything and everybody will flourish under me by the mere effect of my elegance and eloquence, and thus I shall charm the lions and tigers of Democracy.'

"No, Sire; if you had meditated on the work performed before your time and had grasped the philosophy of history, you would not attempt everything only to have your efforts end in smoke; you would begin with a definite end in view, and, without a word, you would silently and patiently face the danger until it had passed. You have preferred to play the flute and to amuse Germany. But the time is near when people will see that the mask of triumph, of strength, of splendour, behind which you hide your inefficiency, is merely a stage setting. How could it be otherwise when the very throne is a mountebank's platform?"

PART II

Human Qualities in the Monarch

CHAPTER I

WILLIAM II.'S PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

WILLIAM II. has forty-four years behind him. He is in the mid-day of his life. Physically and morally he has attained his full growth. It is a tempting idea to sketch the portrait of this Prince, but it is not an easy matter to depict the features and the flexible, cinematographic countenance. The face as well as the soul has changed with years.

It is said that when his Majesty was born his left arm was shorter and weaker than the right. Whether this was due to accident or was an idiosyncrasy of birth, no one knows. Possibly the left arm exerted itself beyond its strength with its first gestures, or was injured by one of the physicians in attendance on the mother. Such, at least, is the Court version. Socialists, however, who in all countries have a pleasant, delicate way of putting things, deny the accident tale and speak of rickets and degeneration. In fact, the Emperor now uses both arms and hands equally well, and when he plays the piano, which is quite frequent,

no one suspects any difference in force or flexibility between them.[1]

William II. is a little above the average in height, being 1.71 metres, or about five feet, seven inches. In the last five years he has thickened out, and, since 1902, he seems to have aged considerably.

Even before he had that trouble with his throat,[2] which excited so much talk not long ago, it had become evident that his Majesty fatigued himself more quickly than had formerly been the case. The Emperor has had several fainting spells, which, although kept secret, have alarmed his *entourage*. It is also said that he is afflicted with varicose veins. What is beyond doubt, however, is that certain physicians who have attended him in consultation have prescribed a vegetable diet and less meat. Unfortunately, William II. is an enemy of the doctor's rules. He has more confidence in surgery than he has in medicine. Like Molière, he never loses his chance to enjoy a joke at the expense of the disciples of Æsculapius and Hippocrates. Certain papers, which have the reputation

[1] The fact that William II. has a more or less withered left arm is well known in Berlin. He cannot raise this arm from the shoulder, although he can use the hand in driving or in playing on the piano. He frequently makes use of his right hand to place the left in position. His misfortune is authoritatively attributed to a mistake made by the physician who was in charge of the *accouchement* of the Empress Frederick.—TRANSLATOR.

[2] There will not be found in this book any details or comment concerning the accident which so keenly touched Germany at the end of 1903. Either the affliction was passing—in which case there is nothing to be said; or it was an inherited affection of the Hohenzollern throat—in which case silence becomes obligatory. One can only pity the victim of fate, and hold tongue and pen before the unfortunate man.

of possessing the confidence of the Court, declare that present-day signs of a falling off in the Imperial health are not to be wondered at, since the Kaiser is drawing near to what may be called the "age of decline," and at this period a constitutional crisis is always manifest in human health. "Moreover," they add, "the Empress, although younger than he and less susceptible to the effects of travelling and other trying exertions, has, for a year past, been in bad health." She was even operated on, and the Emperor, much affected by the circumstance, is reported to have said: "You see we are growing old."

The real countenance of the Kaiser is perceptibly different from the portraits of him that are on sale the world over. It is not softer but is relieved by an expression, of which even the best reproductions give a poor idea. The skull is medium and regular; the bones are clearly defined beneath the flesh. The forehead is high, broad, and rounded; two furrows have found their way from the temples to the nose, which is straight, thin, and pointed. The eyebrows are light chestnut in colour, while the eyes, neither sunken nor dilated, are a clear bluish grey. Their natural expression is undecided, with just a touch of dreaminess. The flash of the Imperial glance which is seen in his portraits is merely assumed for the photographer.

The mouth is large and the teeth are naturally bad, but well repaired. The lips are thick, especially the under one. The chin is strong but rounded. It is not the chin of an optimist. The voice is strong but well modulated; while the articulation is precise and the tones varied, especially when the speaker wishes to please. His utterance is naturally rapid whether he is speaking German or English, and especially when he speaks French.

It has been particularly noticeable by persons, who have conversed with him, that he has little of that guttural sound so common with Germans when speaking a foreign language. When he speaks French, there come to him with the greatest ease, original expressions, gallicisms, and certain striking expressions drawn either from old French or the latest Parisian. M. Jules Simon was particularly struck to hear the Emperor employ the word *godailler* (to tipple), the picturesque significance of which will be recalled.

In the freedom of intimate discourse, the Imperial gesture is frequent, short, and spontaneous, but less frequent, broader, and more studied before audiences. In proportion as William II. has felt his power and popularity grow, his gestures and expressions have become more modified.

About 1880, when he was twenty-one years of age, his face was full and without character. His attitude was modest, and his look quite tranquil. To-day the lower lip appears more prominent. Altogether, the expression was sensitive and a trifle unsophisticated. In 1884, the face began to take on character; the nose asserted itself, and individuality became more defined, but the features, as a whole, still lacked expression. In 1887, certain characteristics showed themselves, wrinkles appeared, the cheek-bones became more prominent; and in 1888, the expression of the eyes changed; they became grave and thoughtful. William II. was then on the throne.

From the very first his exterior appearance has been a matter of his most thoughtful solicitation. Bussler, Marx, W. Schuch came to paint him, and the photographers of the Court vied with each other in representing his countenance. Still, neither portraits nor photographs showed anything but a serious expression.

It may be recalled, however, that at this time (1888) German Socialists were giving the Crown considerable uneasiness—quite as serious as that which was being caused in France by the Boulanger crisis.

Then there came in 1891, Prell's canvas, in which William II. appears almost lowering, indomitable, and capable of everything. It was then that he held Germany in the hollow of his hand, and Socialism seemed to be bending before him. Later on, from Koner, Noster, Fechner, Kossek, Herkomer, and several other painters we have a series of portraits in which all human personality seems lacking. It is not the man, it is the demi-god, the *Imperator* who has posed. It was then 1892. The glance had settled down to perpetual imperiousness, but the ends of the mustache had not yet been pointed upward; they were combed out like a fan.

In 1894, after a series of national tribulations had passed over Germany, the definite type of to-day was adopted; the points of the mustache were trained under the eyes and directed toward heaven. This innovation was performed with the collaboration of the Court barber, Hapy, who, from his first appearance, followed his august master everywhere he went in order to preserve the ferocious appearance of the Imperial mustache. Hapy and his apparatus for preserving the contour of mustaches (*fixe-moustaches. Est ist erreicht*), soon became celebrated and ever since, the admirers of William II. among his own people and elsewhere have been addicted to the use of Hapy's invention.

From 1894 the features of the Kaiser have become more and more accentuated, but what the face has lost in flesh the body has made up, and, little by little, the lower lip, growing in prominence, has assumed an ironical drop; the eyes are lifted and directed straight

to the front and their glance seems more indomitable than ever. There are not more than two Imperial portraits which do not reproduce this superior expression. One shows William II. in sailor costume taking a holiday; it depicts him as comparatively young and jovial. The same expression is to be found in the portrait painted by Marguerite Fritze, in 1898; here the countenance is open and smiling. What is perhaps his latest portrait represents him at Danzig in Hussar uniform. Here we have the face well matured and reflective, but with no taint of assumed seriousness. He no longer plays his *rôle;* he lives it.

Portraits and photographs usually reveal him in uniform. There are only six pictures of the Emperor in civil dress.

His hobby of changing his costume on every conceivable occasion is well known; this, of course, indicates a formidable wardrobe. He always wears military dress at receptions and *fêtes* and when he gives audiences. He travels, pays visits, and discharges the business of State in uniform. If one wishes to see him otherwise attired, either in Berlin or in the country, one must wait for summer when he plays tennis, which is one of his favourite sports. Then he dresses in white flannel but only for a few hours at a time. The game over, he covers his white suit with a military cloak.

When travelling abroad, as, for example, in Norway, he frequently dresses in civilian costume. In these circumstances William II. prefers a suit of brown or bright grey. At the regattas of the Imperial Yacht Club at Kiel, or at Cowes, in England, the Emperor appears in club uniform—white trousers, blue jacket, and blue cap bearing the insignia of the Club. When he visits a foreign Court he invariably appears in the uniform of

one of the regiments in which he holds an honorary commission. It is only at Windsor Castle that he discards this custom. It is a well-known fact that the members of the British Royal family, to whom he is related by his mother, only array themselves in uniforms on rare occasions such as those which have exclusively a military character.

At the funeral of Queen Victoria, the Kaiser wore the full-dress uniform of the Grenadiers of the Prussian Guard, and it is related that when he made his appearance behind the coffin of the Queen, the English had only eyes for this *Deutscher Kaiser* already verging on the portly, and who, under the paraphernalia of medals and his shining helmet with its white eagle, presented an imposing aspect. It was quite natural that the London newspaper men, in their accounts of the ceremony, should have devoted more "space" to him than to the members of the Royal family of Great Britain.

There is one phase of William II.'s character which, for some time past, has revealed itself with truly British characteristics. The Kaiser is very fond of athletic sports and plays at them after the English custom—foot-ball, rowing, riding, tennis, etc. But he exercises not so much through taste as because he understands that these sports preserve his suppleness and develop his strength. One of his most ardent ambitions has been to be worthy of the title, *Schneidiger Brandenburger* (frisky Brandenburger), which he is very fond of conferring upon himself.

Everywhere and at all times, William II. is a man of appearances, of external show. He knows how to appeal to the imagination of the masses and possesses a perfect fund of poses. Some one has said in regard to a great French actress: "She is a princess of ges-

ture." It may be said of him: "He is a prince of gesture."

There is a certain photograph of the Kaiser which has only been seen as a rare privilege. Incidentally it is the result of an indiscretion. It illustrates better than all other pictures his monomania for sensational appearance, which he must, perforce, assume since he is incapable of rendering it otherwise. This photograph represents him seated on the throne, an ermine cloak upon his shoulders, the Imperial sceptre and globe in his hands, while on his head reposes a stucco-work imitation of the crown of Charlemagne.

William II. has never been crowned Emperor. To be so crowned has been his most cherished desire—to have the crown placed upon his head amid great pomp, in a ceremony the carefully calculated effects of which would produce an everlasting impression on the minds of the people. His dream has been to bring back to life, for his own profit, the glory of the sacred past; but such a coronation would be unconstitutional. The Princes of the Federation, in whose gift lies the bestowal of the honour, are opposed to granting it, and they designated him as they had his grandfather before him, simply as *Deutscher Kaiser* (German Emperor, not Emperor of Germany), and they gave to this title official consecration.

It is unlikely that the Kaiser foresaw this veto,[1] as

[1] Apropos of the desire of William II. to be crowned Emperor, the following amusing anecdote was told me in London by a diplomat who had been attached to his country's embassy in Berlin:

When William II. wished to sound the Federal Princes in regard to his sacred project, he called to him Count H——, the son of a general for whom the Emperor had great affection. The young man was informed that he had to discharge a mission of great delicacy, which was to go from court to court and

he had in 1892 a special throne constructed after the antiquarian drawings of Emile Doepler with this ceremony in view. He even ordered a reproduction of the ancient crown which had formerly belonged to Carlus Magnus, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, but which was quite too small for his own brow.

Throne and crown had to be relegated to what may be called the "property room" at Potsdam; but not before they had served as accessories to a photograph. The photographer solemnly promised to destroy the plates after having printed a few pictures for the Emperor. He also kept two or three for himself, and later on they were unearthed by a wealthy American who happened to visit his studio. The find was, to be sure, very valuable, and the Yankee, completely carried

make himself agreeable to the women in the *entourages* of the various princes. To his advantage he had his name, his twenty-seven years, his good looks, and the favour of the Emperor. Unfortunately, he received nothing but the most cruel rebuffs. He came back pale and worn out. He had done his duty as well as he knew how, but, notwithstanding all his efforts, the Emperor was not crowned.

What is the story worth? That is difficult to say. In the utter impossibility of finding any trace of confirmation for it, we must exclude it from those which have both authority and confirmation. Still, there is sufficient verisimilitude in it to cause one to say that it ought to be true even if it is n't.

1. A far more trustworthy story concerns a gathering of the princes in Berlin in the fall of 1892, when the Emperor, after reviewing his lineage from Charlemagne, who had been crowned *Imperator* at Rome, on Christmas Day, 800, broached the subject of his own claims to that crown in all its functions. In continuing his speech he referred to the Federal Princes as his "vassals." Thereupon the late Prince Woldemar of Lippe-Detmold interrupted his Majesty with: "No, Sire, not your vassals. Your allies, if you like."—TRANSLATOR.

away, offered in exchange for these photographs a wad of bank notes of respectable proportions. The photographer did not have the courage to resist the temptation; and thus it is that the citizens of free America may learn that, in the only instance in which the German Emperor sat on a throne with the crown of Charlemagne on his head, he was obliged to be satisfied with a "property" diadem.

CHAPTER II

WILLIAM II. AS HUSBAND AND FATHER

ALTHOUGH, as one may imagine, the domestic life of the Kaiser is full of surprises, the events of a single day offer but a poor criterion of his general existence. Prince Bismarck used to say that "the daily occupations of William II. are as variable as wind and weather." Whether sincere or exaggerated, this opinion of the old Chancellor once inspired certain journalists to obtain from a high Court personage attached to the person of William II., a detailed programme of the daily life of the Kaiser. But this programme merely refers to those calm days—days in which there are no storms. And these days are very rare—about twenty a year.

Such as it is, here is the programme, now quite a tradition. The best version appeared some time ago in *Le Figaro:*

"The Imperial couple generally rise at six o'clock. In the morning the Emperor wears the uniform of a general in fatigue dress. That is a family custom. William I. used to say: 'We Hohenzollerns know nothing about dressing-gowns (*Sehlafroecke*).' Even the Empress wears in the morning a street costume; never a dressing-sack. Hardly are they up when the Empress herself prepares her husband's *café* in her little salon. This first meal of their Majesties, which they

always eat alone, consists of tea, eggs, and cold meats. Footmen remain outside in an ante-chamber, and only present themselves when rung for. Toward seven or eight o'clock the young princes and the Princess Victoria Louise are admitted to wish their parents good morning. At eight o'clock work begins. The Emperor goes into his study, while the Empress busies herself by giving orders such as are usual for a housewife to give, or, she occupies herself with her dresses, or with her hospitals or the churches which are carried on under her patronage.

"At the end of an hour, whether summer or winter, Emperor and Empress go for a drive. The carriage usually takes them through the *Thiergarten*, and is generally out from nine until a quarter of ten. At ten the Emperor listens to the report of the Marshal of the Court, Count von Eulenburg, in the large hall decorated with the busts of William I., Moltke, Roon, and Richard Wagner. The Marshal of the Court deals with affairs of personal importance to the royal household, and presents the programme of the fêtes to be given, the journeys to be made. Count von Eulenburg is usually followed by the chief of the Military Cabinet, Herr von Hahnke, then by the chief of the Civil Cabinet, Herr von Lucanus—that most dreaded of ministers. Then comes the Chancellor of the Empire, and, from time to time, a Secretary of State. Audiences follow the reports of ministers and secretaries.

"At one o'clock, all is over. At half-past one, the Emperor and Empress sit down to the second meal of the day, in the Hall of Columns. At this meal, which is always very simple, never lasting longer than thirty minutes, there are usually present, twice a week or so, certain high functionaries of the Court. The dinner consists of a soup, an *entrée*, a roast, and side dishes,

with red or white table wine. With dessert they have sparkling Moselle.

"After dinner, their Majesties have coffee in the Empress's apartments, and then go out driving, visiting the studios of painters or sculptors.

" At half-past five urgent affairs of State occupy the Emperor, or he pays a visit to some foreign ambassador or to the Chancellor of the Empire. At this time he also attentively reads the newspaper extracts which have been cut out for him, but sometimes he asks for copies of the papers from which the clippings have been taken, and these he very often reads from beginning to end. The evening is passed either at the theatre or at a dinner party, either at some friend's—in which case the Emperor has previously gone over the list of guests —or at the palace. William II. likes to play *skat*, which is at once the most complicated and the most interesting of German card games. Often, when he loses he breaks out in ungovernable fits of anger, and, if his partners have the misfortune to have made a mistake, he overwhelms them with vehement reproaches. But when the spasm has passed, he is the first to laugh and endeavour to put everybody in good humour by his graciousness, which is exquisite. By midnight, as often as possible, everybody is asleep in the castle."

Ever since the King of Prussia has borne the title of German Emperor, the expenses of the Court have been greatly increased. As Emperor, he has no Civil List. He is obliged to cover his expenses either from his private fortune, which is considerable, or from the revenues of the royal Crown. It is only in his capacity as King of Prussia that he has a Civil List. To be sure, the Reichstag every year votes about 2,600,000 marks as a fund on which the Emperor may draw, but this fund is usually pretty much eaten up in advance by de-

fraying the expenses of pardons, by donations, and by aiding the sick, etc; so that, it is said, there remains for the Kaiser's own use less than 100,000 marks. The Empress is usually charged with the distribution of Imperial donations. She acquits herself of these duties with so much delicacy and tact that she has gone far to make the name of her husband almost popular.

Up to 1889, the King of Prussia received from the Royal Treasury an income of 7,719,296 marks, as the revenue of his domain, and to this was added 4,500,000 marks (income from the Crown Trust Fund) making in all exactly 12,219,296 marks, or about $3,054,824. The only sum which the Emperor may draw from the Imperial budget is 122,260 marks, which goes to the support of his Civil Cabinet.

It might be supposed that the income from the Crown Trust Fund ought to be sufficient to defray the expenses of the Court, of the numerous Imperial family, of the Empress, and of his Majesty's brothers and sisters, as well as the fixed incomes of the Royal and Imperial Princes. But it also devolves upon the King to pay the expenses of the royal theatres at Berlin, Hanover, and Cassel, and of the Court, garden, and country concerts, etc.

To make a long story short: for several years past, the sum of twelve and a quarter millions has not been enough. The Reichstag has even been moved to accept a proposal by which the Court stipend has been increased by 3,500,000 marks. Thus it is that the Imperial revenues now reach exactly 15,719,296 marks, or about $3,930,654, a sum which, in the estimation of the public, is far from satisfying all the fancies of his Majesty.

The Emperor has a very fine collection of plate. This treasure represents in the neighbourhood of 5,000,000

marks, and dates from the times of the great Frederick and of the "corporal king," Frederick William I.

Prince Henry took part of it on his trip to America in order to add a certain magnificence to the dinners he gave. There are many pieces of genuine artistic and historical value in the collection. The most beautiful is a dinner service for fifty persons, the mere intrinsic value of which is 40,000 marks.

For her part the Empress has her casket of jewels, which, if not the richest in Europe—it is incomparably less magnificent than that of the Czarina—represents the pretty sum of 5,000,000 marks.

The Empress is not the owner of all the ornaments with which she may adorn her person. A great many of the jewels belong to the Treasury of the Prussian Crown, and are merely placed at the disposition of the queens of Prussia. But those which the Empress already possessed, as Princess von Sleswig-Holstein, as well as others which have been given her by her husband, are, of course, her own property. To these may be added the jewels which she has inherited from Empress Augusta and Empress Frederick.

The personal treasury of the Empress contains a large variety of gems, thirty rings of various values, brooches, and bracelets, all set with diamonds. Her Majesty's Court dress, which is trimmed with gems, has a train estimated to be worth 40,000 marks, which with its trimming is worth three or four times more. Her ball slippers are set off with diamond buckles.

Here is an item which may interest husbands—and incidentally their wives: The Kaiser is very much concerned about the way the Empress dresses, especially on gala occasions. It so happened that one evening in Italy, William II. was much struck with the dazzling ball dress which finely set off the imposing carriage of

Queen Marguerite. She was, indeed, the object of general admiration. As for the German Empress, although lavishly gotten up, she appeared altogether spare and lean in a gown that revealed neither variety nor art.

A Frenchman may be excused for adding that the toilette of the Queen of Italy came from Paris and that of the German Empress from Berlin, but, on this point history is not exact; it is a fact, however, that William II. was humiliated. It had seemed to him among the things impossible that, in true elegance of dress, an Italian Queen could carry off the palm from a German Empress. Such a thing was contrary to the protocol. Henceforth he caused his wife's gowns to be greatly modified and especially had them more puffed out. They say that it is from this Italian sojourn that the Emperor's taste for crinoline dates, which, according to him, may be used as an admirable auxiliary to the feminine bust.

At official ceremonies, the Empress wears a large diadem, placed directly on the crown of her head, the hair of which sparkles with jewelled pins. This diadem is set with a cut diamond as large as a cherry, which is surrounded with thirty or forty smaller stones.

All these jewels are kept, when not in use, in a room especially arranged for them and under a special watchman. A few days before the Empress is to use her jewels, the Court goldsmith carefully goes over the stones, examines their settings, and ascertains whether it is necessary to burnish them in order to bring out their lustre.

On ordinary occasions the Empress does not wear precious stones. The Emperor, it is said, likes this simple taste. One day, when the Empress had nothing on her finger but her wedding ring, he is reported to

have said to her: "Gustel (endearing diminutive for Augusta), this is how I like to see you best."

It has been remarked in some quarters that William does not reveal a similar gentleness toward his younger brother, Prince Henry of Prussia. There have been several altercations, indeed, what might be called violent quarrels, between the two brothers. In a memorable political discussion, it is said, that the Kaiser, wishing to cut short his brother's objections, reminded him that he was speaking to his sovereign. Thereupon Prince Henry replied by using a term which is not to be found in the vocabulary of court etiquette. William, beside himself with rage, threw himself upon his younger brother, only to meet with a pugilist's reception.

The incident closed by the Prince being placed under arrest, and very soon after, he was sent in command of the German squadron to the Far East, where he remained for two years. On the occasion of his departure, the ever-ironical Socialists took occasion to comment on the Kaiser's farewell speech to Prince Henry (a speech in which the Emperor invited his brother to use "his mailed fist" against the Chinese), and insinuated that his Majesty doubtless had good reason to believe in the efficacy of his younger brother's hard muscles.

But this anecdote evidently had its origin among the evil-minded.

A good husband, even to the verge of indulgence, William II. is naturally a severe father. His discipline is rigid toward his children, for the reason that he was himself rigidly brought up. There is no exaggeration in saying that his infancy was literally lulled to sleep by the thunder of cannon, the clash of arms, and the trumpet calls of victory.

At the time his youthful intelligence was just beginning to wake up, the Dynasty of the Hohenzollerns was consolidating its power on the field of battle. In 1870, he was twelve years old. At an age when young boys listen with awe to the stories of war and fighting, he was living among those very men whom his people, even to-day, look upon as the knights of a great epoch in which his father and grandfather were heroes. Ought not the fruit of all these victories (the Danish War crowned with the laurels of Deppel and Fredericia, the Hanoverian War with Langensalza, not to mention Sadowa and Sedan) to augment the strength of the Dynasty to which destiny called him as the head?

His vanity urged him in that direction. From his very infancy the idea of glory intoxicated him, but, being a frail child he gave no promise of becoming a soldier, in spite of the fact that the Hohenzollerns have ever been a military family.

At an age when other little boys rejoice in their first pair of trousers, the young Hohenzollerns have been and continue to be lieutenants in one of the Guards regiments. The children of William II. are no more spoiled than was their father. Maurice Busch, Bismarck's secretary, relates in his *Memoirs* how, on one occasion, he asked the Chancellor whether the children of his master, Frederick William, were disciplined by corporal punishment, and Bismarck, without replying directly to his inquiry, told him the following anecdote:

One of the young princes had just received a flogging from his governess. "Believe me, your Highness," she said to her pupil, "what I have just done causes me as much pain as it does you."

"Ah! In the same place, I suppose?" ironically inquired the Prince—William, the present Kaiser.

"As the father has gone, so will go the children."

The sons of the Kaiser are therefore brought up by the rod.

While pursuing his studies at Bonn three years ago, the Crown Prince had little taste for the postprandial sports of his comrades. The roughness and coarseness of certain college customs shocked him, and he complained to his father. But far from sympathising with the peevish heir-apparent to the Crown, the Emperor enjoyed hugely the story of the hazing lark of which his son had been the victim; and he said:

"In this way one learns to know men and the world." —The little German world with its men, and only a very little of that.

On another occasion, the Emperor showed less gaiety. In emulating the tradition scrupulously followed among German students, the Crown Prince once went beyond his allowance and contracted debts—just like any ordinary mortal. Once or twice the money lenders let him off, but, after a while, they became urgent. The Prince gave way to force of circumstances and revealed the situation to his father. The Kaiser would not even listen. The Prince then implored him and took occasion to observe something about his being an officer and a gentleman, etc. Still nothing happened; the Kaiser continued to remain obdurate, and the only satisfaction that his son got was to receive a photograph of William II., representing him with the Empress as a good father and husband.

A laconic note accompanied the present. In a few pointed words, the Emperor advised the Prince to place the photograph in plain view on his study-table in order that the sight of his parents might constantly remind him of the duty he owed them.

That was a little tale which was repeated about Berlin for three weeks. It appealed to the Berliners very

much, in spite of the fact that certain peevish persons pretended to see in it a little family comedy that had been made to order.[1]

As William II. is too busy to look after the primary education of his children, or, owing to the fact that he has no definite ideas as to the methods to be followed, the Empress or confidential instructors take charge of their first lessons. It may be easily imagined, however, that on account of his fantastic and changing spirit, the Emperor very often gets the idea that things are not going as they should. One day he appeared in the schoolroom, scolded the children and stormed about generally, until tears began to flow. The Empress came in upon him just as he was striding around shouting: "I will be obeyed. I am master!"

"So you are in your kingdom," replied the Empress; "but here there is only one mistress, and it is I."

The Kaiser shows more indulgence toward his only daughter, Victoria Louise, than he does toward his sons. The greatest joy of the Princess, who is twelve years of age, is to go with her father *unter den Linden*. She is very much amused by the salutations of the crowd. Having great affection for her father she likes to frolic with him and he graciously consents not to take these manifestations in bad humour. He has even been heard to say:

"My daughter is very proud to be known as the daughter of the Kaiser, but it never enters her head that her father is actually an emperor."

[1] To-day it is said to be impossible to find in Bonn creditors so ill-disposed that they would persecute the heir to the crown of Charlemagne for a paltry thousand marks. So the above touching tale, which sets forth the rigid virtue of William II., may be merely the result of a "confidence" from a member of the Civil Cabinet to the good-natured press.

The three elder sons of William II. are respectively twenty-one, nineteen, and seventeen years of age. The youngest, Prince Adalbert, is in the navy. If his father's intentions are carried out, he should, some day, succeed his uncle, Prince Henry, as the head of the German navy. As to the second son, Prince Eitel, it is understood that he will be a great general like his grandfather, Frederick III., ex-Prince Royal, the victor of Sadowa, of Wissemburg, of Froeschwiller, and of Metz. He has military instructors, and studies tactics and strategy from choice, while he neglects the classics, philosophy, and art. People believe that he will make a perfect Prussian general. As to the Crown Prince, who, if the fates permit, will be William III., he is also in the army, holding an officer's commission in the Guards. But he does not seem to be altogether suited to command German arms. His father has found him a trifle slack—"not enough soldier, not enough Hohenzollern." [1]

The two younger Princes, August and Joachim, are still at that happy age when they give no care of the day or of the morrow. These eaglets have so far no history, but before long they will travel, as their elder

[1] On the evening of September 5, 1904, while the Kaiser was visiting at Schleswig-Holstein, he received a telegram from the Crown Prince at Gelbensande announcing his engagement to the Duchess Cecilia, sister of the reigning Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The Duchess, who some day may become the German Empress, is a tall, slight girl with light-brown hair and eyes. Although not at all pretty, she has a vivid complexion and is very animated. She is well educated and shows a proficiency in language, writing and speaking, besides German, French and Russian with ease and fluency. The cultivation of Russian has always been a rule in her family, for the house of Mecklenburg-Schwerin is the only reigning dynasty in Western Europe of Slavonic origin.—TRANSLATOR.

brothers did before them; for their father is a firm believer in the principle: "Travel forms youth."

It is said that, after reading a speech by President Félix Faure, several years ago, he suddenly took it into his head to enlarge his sons' horizon. In addressing the members of a French Chamber of Commerce, the President of the Republic had said: "Make your boys travel," and he went on to expatiate on the advantages of travelling.

The Crown Prince has been to Austria, England, and Russia. He also accompanied his brother, Eitel, to Egypt, where they both had an attack of the measles. Prince Adalbert has been received by the Sultan at Constantinople. The question was then deliberated upon of sending the Crown Prince on a voyage to Japan and even on a tour around the world. But the Empress objected on account of the magnitude of the journeys contemplated and owing to the fact that the Prince was still too young to be running across seas and continents. The Emperor yielded—at least, for the time being.

William II. is one of those few monarchs who cling to ancient customs in all their royal detail and display. A respect for traditions is one of the most salient traits of his character. But ceremonies are expensive, and his manner of living, his numerous family, and his constantly shifting the Court from one place to another, demand a large retinue and a not inconsiderable expense and liberality.

In regard to his children, this liberality is especially displayed at Christmas. Then the Emperor and Empress organise an intimate family festival. Each child has a Christmas tree. The Empress herself does the Christmas shopping and chooses a tasty gift for each member of the family. The children also buy presents and pay for them out of their own pocket money.

As for the Emperor, he has not time to occupy himself with details. Each year, as Christmas draws near, he has his children make out lists of the presents they would like to have. He then has brought before him specimens of the various gifts mentioned, and from them he makes his selections. He always pays attention to what each one desires.

He usually has something out of the ordinary for the Empress and this frequently takes the shape of a most delightful surprise. Sometimes he astonishes his entourage by bestowing gifts not mentioned in the lists. He has a marked preference for the photographs of his own august person, and never omits to furnish them with his autograph: "WILHEM I. R." He is less prodigal with twenty-mark pieces which he has mounted as scarf-pins.

It is a tradition at the Berlin Court that ambassadors and their wives shall be invited to the Christmas celebration, which begins with a dinner and is followed with the Christmas tree on the branches of which each member of the diplomatic corps finds a gift which is, as far as possible, in accordance with his supposed desires. The Kaiser, however, does not generally draw upon his imagination in an attempt to suit everybody. For several years past he has made the presents uniform. Every ambassadress and every wife of a foreign envoy accredited to Berlin has received a twenty-mark piece set with diamonds and mounted in the form of a brooch. Their husbands have, every one, received two ten-mark pieces also set with diamonds and made into sleeve buttons. What munificence and what simplicity!

It sometimes happens, when the Kaiser feels his reputation or his popularity at stake, that he knows how to show a truly royal generosity. Thus at the close of his sojourn in England, at the time of the funeral of his

grandmother, Queen Victoria, he left as tips for the servants at Windsor and Osborne the sum of 10,000 marks.

Nevertheless, it is not he who holds the championship for generosity in the eyes of the occupants of the servants' hall at Windsor. That distinction belongs to Alexander III. of Russia, who, in a single week, dropped 20,000 pounds sterling among the personnel attached to that famous British palace.

CHAPTER III

WILLIAM II. AS PROPRIETOR, GUEST, AND HOST

THE old Emperor William I., whose economy or rather stinginess was proverbial, left a comparatively large fortune, in securities and cash, to his successor. As to William II., he spends more than he receives, and it is said that his finances are steadily growing more and more involved.

The Emperor is under heavy obligations to certain German financiers, who, in order to increase his resources, have induced him to take part in their enterprises and to operate on 'change. It has even been said that if William II. showed great energy in pushing matters against the unfortunate but hardly estimable Republic of Venezuela, it was because he was personally interested in the litigation. Certain great banking houses of Hamburg had purchased on his account, a large quantity of "Venezuelans" at an extremely low figure. He tried his best to save the investment. This is the true cause of that glorious campaign carried on by great and powerful Germany against impotent, little Venezuela. The quite unheard of ridiculousness of this affair did not prevent the papers on the other side of the Rhine from heaping sarcasm on us, when our own Government sent a couple of cruisers into Turkish waters in order to recover the Lorando-Tubini credits.

The story of the "beam" and the "mote" is as applicable on the banks of the Spree as it is elsewhere.

It is proper to add, however, that our business did not concern South America with its tragico-vaudeville republics, but Turkey and that most humane of monarchs, his Majesty Abdul Hamid, for whom William II. poses as the most devoted protector — admirable politics this, doubtless engineered for the purpose of annoying France and Russia.

Aside from his personal property, the Emperor possesses a large fortune in real estate. He is actually the owner of fifty-two country seats, three of which, Château Royal, Belle-vue, and Monbijou, are within the confines of Berlin, and thirteen are in Potsdam and its vicinity. At Potsdam is the celebrated Château of Sans-Souci, immortalised by Voltaire and Frederick the Great. Two others, that of Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel, to which Napoleon III. was taken after the battle of Sedan, and that of Urville, in Lorraine, to which the Emperor goes every year with his family, have, from time to time, the honour of being inhabited by their Majesties. The others, however, are rarely visited; there are too many of them, and the minutes of the German Emperor are numbered. All these estates are under the care of agents (*Kastellane*), and, from time to time, the Marshal of the Court inspects them. They, together with the Kaiser's eighty-three farms, represent a total territory of 98,748 hectares, or a little less than half that number of acres. William II. also owns an estate in Switzerland, which was bequeathed to him last year.

In fact, the personal fortune of the Emperor has been several times augmented by bequests. Baroness Cohn-Oppenheim, who died in Berlin, in 1903, left several million marks to him on account of his having

permitted her, as a special mark of favour, to bear the name and title of her parents, after the death of her father, Baron Cohn-Oppenheim.

Among those estates which especially interest his Majesty, may be mentioned the farm of Kadinen, in Eastern Prussia. He has owned this for about four years. Formerly it had been badly managed; its condition was very bad, when he came into possession. It could, of course, have been rendered profitable at once by substituting modern methods and modern farm appliances for the old, but the Kaiser preferred to make use of what he had on hand, instead of having recourse to costly innovations.

Under intelligent management the farm has greatly improved and is now developing steadily through its own resources. The end which the Kaiser had in view has been attained. Energy and enterprise have won the day.

As has been said, the Kaiser is very fond of this farm, which includes a dairy, an oil well, and a distillery. All the machinery is run by alcohol, which is made from the potatoes, the annual harvest of which is, at least, twenty thousand quintals. A little Decauville railway, also run by alcohol, furnishes the transportation for the products, which also comprise cows, sheep, swine, and horses, not to mention fancy live stock.

Following the example of his uncle, Edward VII. the Kaiser is very fond of inviting himself, without ceremony, to the houses of certain great personages. These visits are usually made in the hunting season, but very often, in Berlin, the Emperor expresses the desire to dine with the Chancellor of the Empire, or at the houses of his personal friends, Prince Henckel von Donnersmark, Prince von Pless, etc.

All the ingenuity of the master of the house is ex-

hausted in order to entertain the Sovereign like any other guest of distinction by paying attention to his smallest wish, in the most natural manner possible. On his side, the Kaiser does his best to appear unaffected and jovial.

His first words on visiting Prince von Pless, to whose place he had come for a stay of several days, were: "Do not forget that I leave sceptre and crown at the threshold!"

On this occasion Prince von Pless had invited several mutual friends as well as their wives to meet the Kaiser. At the dinner which followed his Majesty's arrival, the Imperial and Royal guest, according to Court etiquette, was placed opposite his host. William II., in the simplest manner possible, picked up his plate and glass, and said to the Prince: "Pless, take your accustomed place. I gladly surrender my prerogatives in order to sit between two lovely women."

And he drew up his chair between the Princess von Pless and the Duchess von Ratibor. History does not relate whether these two grand dames were really the most lovely at the table or whether the Emperor had wished to please them by a bit of gallantry.

On occasions similar to the one described, the evening after dinner is always very gay. The Emperor usually takes it upon himself to organise some amusement in the drawing-room. One evening he said to the guests: "I have a great surprise in store for you!"

And he had a great box brought in, which contained a ping-pong set, a game, which has had great vogue in England but which is little played in France.

"This is a present from my Uncle Edward!" added the Emperor.

The Kaiser is very fond of being among his officers and frequently invites himself to the officers' club of the

garrison he happens to be visiting. Previous to 1903 he proved a most jovial table companion-in-arms.

It is a well-known fact that, moved by patriotic zeal, William II. frequently affects to be the enemy of French champagne. Only the sparkling wines of the Rhine or Constance find favour in his eyes. Still, he has a liking for Tokai, an extremely dear Austrian wine, which agrees neither with the taste nor the purse of every one. Evil tongues pretend that he has made Tokai fashionable in Germany for the sole purpose of increasing the revenues of his "ancient friend and father," Francis Joseph. As a matter of fact, the Emperor of Austria has a monopoly of this brand in his own country, and the Tokai of commerce no more resembles that drank at the table of Schoenbrunn, than the French manufactured champagnes do genuine Roederer. But this does not prevent it from being sold at twenty or twenty-five crowns a bottle.

The Emperor is a true connoisseur. One day at a military dinner, *Monet et Chandon* champagne was served to him in a bottle bearing a German label. At the first taste, William II. noticed the substitution. He was very much displeased, either because he thought that this infringement of his laws was frequent, or because his friends had believed him capable of confounding German "champagne" with the French brand.

Like every true Teuton, William II. is obliged to like beer. It is the national, traditional, and patriotic drink. He always takes it when he visits the regiments stationed in the depths of old Prussia. It is customary to serve him with a fresh glass when he has half finished the one before him.

Everybody knows that the Brandenburgers, the Prussians, and the Poles are great drinkers. It is also a well-known fact that the Emperor yields to none the

superiority in anything, and this assurance dominates him, when, on a visit to the Eastern part of his Empire, he has put a number of pints of Pilsen inside of him. Several speeches which he has delivered before the burgermasters or municipal officers of East Germany, begin with these suggestive words:

"Now, gentlemen, let 's fill 'em once more!"

And possibly the circumstance of a well-stocked table has not been without effect in shaping the Kaiser's harangues.

If he is a hearty eater and drinker, however, he is by no means a *gourmet*. He is especially fond of middle-class cooking. His preference is for carp served with beer. He also likes the game pies of Thuringia.

At one time, the Emperor was a great smoker. He then affected very strong cigars especially made for his use and costing in the neighbourhood of six francs or $1.20 a-piece. For the last year or so he has been trying to swear-off. While hunting, he invariably smokes a pipe, and now, at Court, he occasionally indulges in a mild cigar. Improbable as it may seem, he will, at times, go for weeks without smoking. But the resolution is dropped as quickly as it has been taken. During these periods of abstinence, the entourage of his Majesty also has to refrain from the use of tobacco. Cigars are not even passed around after dinner.

During his cruises in Norway, William II. frequently looks upon, with an indulgent eye, the relaxing of the severity of the "protocol." He chats with the members of his suite in the most cordial manner, watches the games of the sailors, and is by no means the last to imitate them.

One evening he had gathered about him in his cabin the members of his entourage and the officers of his yacht, the *Hohenzollern*. They were drinking

champagne and eating cakes. All at once, the Emperor ordered his guests to open their mouths and began a *jeu de tonneau* by tossing bits of cake at the gaping and stupefied faces of those around him. With more or less grace they tried to fall into the spirit of this ill-bred-child's game. Suddenly one officer captured the morsel which was directed toward his mouth and consigned it to his pocket.

For a moment the Emperor was nonplussed; then he inquired in the tone of an offended Jupiter: "Why don't you do as the others, mein herr?"

"Sire," was the reply, "I wish to preserve some tangible souvenir of this memorable evening."

No one knows whether this was an expression of homage or an ironical thrust. The Emperor accepted it in the light of the former, and said no more.

As a general thing these voyages in Norwegian waters are prolific in all sorts of incidents, some serious and some amusing. The Emperor prides himself on being a consummate navigator. Once on entering a *fjord* he wished to pilot his yacht himself. The officer at the wheel seeing that the Imperial amateur was driving the vessel on a rock, made an instinctive movement of apprehension, and then cried out. The Emperor became furious at this mark of disrespect and did not hesitate to deliver a blow with his fist—such as Napoleon gave Volney. The officer, thanks to his pluck and alertness, not only dodged the blow, but saved the ship.

The "original" conceits of his Majesty are innumerable.

Once after dinner, while on a visit to Posen, he wished to smoke a cigar. He searched in his pockets for a pen-knife with which to cut the end. A high officer present, guessing the wish of his sovereign,

brought out his own knife and presented it to him. William II. gravely cut his weed, and, in returning the knife to the officer, just as gravely observed: "Preserve that knife carefully. Some day it will be historic."

Undoubtedly he honestly believed what he said.

It may positively be asserted that the dominant preoccupation of the Kaiser is to watch for or to bring about the "dramatic moment." And when some one's thoughtless indiscretion causes him to miss it, he is not slow in showing his displeasure. He likes to enjoy the astonishment which his acts sometimes provoke. It is a point of etiquette not to anticipate the Kaiser when one sees that he is leading up to his "dramatic moment." He carefully prepares his rôle and plays it till the very end without an instant's hesitation.

The Emperor does not lack wit; but he especially appreciates the humour of the Berliners, which is a trifle broad and not infrequently coarse. Possibly he never imagines that he often keenly wounds persons who may not pay him back.

He is less sarcastic than was his father, Frederick III. But even in the moments of his most exuberant gaiety, his friends must never forget that it is the *roi qui s'amuse.*

CHAPTER IV

WILLIAM II. ABOUT TOWN AND TRAVELLING

NO man has ever felt with keener emotions than the Kaiser the ecstasy of being able to procure for his *naïve* soul the consciousness and exercise of power. Regarding the Imperial character from this point of view, a couplet from the fabulist comes to mind:

> Il aurait volontiers écrit sur son chapeau :
> C'est moi qui suis Guillot, berger de ce troupeau.

"He would willingly have writ upon his hat: 'I am Guillot, the shepherd of this flock.'" He is, indeed, a Guillot invested with an indomitable power above which there is only Providence, whose benign influence seems ever to reach down to him—in the same way that it did to the good Queen Victoria, that most noble lady and worthy grandmother, who was so revered by the Hohenzollerns.

When moved by the all-entrancing beauty of the ocean, one dominating idea seems to smite the spirit of the Kaiser. "It is," he has written, "when in these northern seas while being borne along through the starry night on the vast expanse of waters, that standing on the bridge of my vessel, I have deeply realised that there is nothing above me but my God."

While travelling, he looks after his Imperial dignity with constant care and surrounds himself with the most

minute precautions. These are carried out by that famous German police which the Kaiser one day described as being without a rival in all Europe. This judgment is proper if one understands by it, a police without *esprit de corps*, without politeness, without feeling; a brutal police; one ready to "gaf" everybody in sight.

It may be recalled that the Tautsch trials revealed on the part of this police the most scandalous abuse of power, the basest traits of character, and the most shameless examples of blackmail. Be it understood that these revelations were stifled, since they covered with too unfavourable light the proceedings of the government of the Crown of Prussia. And the Emperor, part and parcel of it himself, uses and abuses his police.

Naturally enough, whenever the Emperor goes out, he is the object of curiosity on the part of cockneys. Berliners, and especially the street boys, crowd upon his way, in order to see him as nearby as possible. People from the provinces, while staying in Berlin, would rather refrain from visiting the museums and eschew the curiosities of the Capital, than renounce the triumph of being able to relate, on their return home, that they had seen "our Emperor" (*unser Kaiser*), with their own eyes.

An elaborate system of maintaining order is always organised for all the thoroughfares which are to be traversed by William II. and his family. The curious crowds are jammed back into the side streets. Ropes, to keep back the public flow, are stretched along the Way of Victory, that famous *Sieges Allee*, which is to-day adorned with pretentious statues, and both sides are lined with police. Mounted police occasionally charge the crowds to keep them at the proper distance. All these measures, curiously resemble a state of siege.

They are taken, however, merely to protect the person of a much-beloved sovereign.

It was but recently that these "precautions" directed against "the indiscreet curiosity of the public" have become necessary. The savoury note of the Grand Martial of the Court, which one may read below, only dates from two years back:

"The desire which is manifested by numerous people to contemplate the Imperial couple in the course of their walks and drives, has unfortunately given rise to inconvenient contingencies, which must be very disagreeable to their Majesties. One often witnesses episodes like the following: Ladies and gentlemen are so carried away by the idea of homage that they would like to march behind the Imperial couple; or, again, they go on ahead of their Majesties in order to turn and meet them again. By waving handkerchiefs and throwing bouquets, they frighten the horses. On general principles, this expression of sentiment, the motive of which is perfectly natural and justifiable, does not in reality typify the respect due to the Imperial family, and degenerates into troublesome demonstrations.

"During his walks or drives about the city, the Emperor is far from wishing that the police should interfere too cruelly with the view of those who desire to look upon his Imperial person. Intelligent citizens should refrain, not only on their own account, from these troublesome manifestations, and should, moreover, by every means in their power, abstain from denying to their Majesties the pleasure of enjoying the fresh air which is often spoiled by these demonstrations which have, of late, become altogether too common.

"Apropos of this subject, we feel obliged to add that the attempts of certain persons to give the Emperor pe-

titions, while on his way, is a custom which is as intolerable as it is useless. Such communications arrive at their destination less often than they would if consigned to the post or sent to the Marshal of the Court at the Royal Palace."

After the warnings, comes the tour of the police, which is not slow in demonstrating its zeal. Scarcely has the Emperor reached a point a hundred metres from the streets he must cross, when the police halts all pedestrians and teams. In the most crowded thoroughfares, this precaution has very often had the result of suspending traffic for hours at a time. In the streets of Berlin carriages do not follow a double file, ascending and descending, and even pedestrians are obliged to take one sidewalk if they wish to go up the street, and the other if they wish to come down. One may readily imagine, therefore, the confusion which arises when the police steps in and divides the two currents. It is impossible and useless to attempt to cross the street or to retrace one's steps.

The Emperor has several times shown his displeasure concerning these police regulations executed in his honour, but so trying to Berliners. One day he stopped his carriage at the Brandenburg gate and ordered the horse-cars, omnibuses, carriages, etc., which were awaiting his exit, to be allowed to move on. He even ordered that the measure, which interrupts traffic, should be suppressed. But it was later revived, for, in reality, his Majesty has little taste for the way democratic crowds are apt to circulate.

The system established for the protection of the Emperor's person is most minutely organised. General indications for its coming expediency emanate from the chief of the Imperial headquarters, that is to say, ordinarily from General von Pless or General von Scholl,

who together keep the president of the police (chief of the Berlin police force) informed as to the Emperor's intentions. The police of the different station houses whose districts are to be traversed by the Emperor, simply carry out an established regulation by keeping the road clear before the Kaiser and holding curious ones at a distance. The care of assuring personal protection to his Majesty, devolves upon the commissioners of the political police. These officials must be well acquainted with the doings of anarchists and they are authorised to employ assistants in unlimited numbers. It is their duty to place their special agents at certain points along the streets to be traversed, and to escort the Imperial carriage when, for example, it is driven through the *Thiergarten*. If we add that besides these precautions there is usually a squadron of lancers around the royal carriage, it will be understood that William II. is satisfactorily guarded.

Nevertheless, in spite of this perfect luxury of precautions, certain incidents have happened, which must have made an impression, more or less deep, on his Majesty's feelings. One day, an insane woman threw a bit of iron at the Emperor which left upon his cheek a mark resembling anodyne. On another occasion, some poor idiot set off a toy bomb under the feet of the horses attached to the Emperor's carriage.

When the Kaiser is about to set out on a journey through the provinces, the headquarters inquire of the local police in the district to be visited, whether it is prepared to assure Imperial security. In case the answer is in the negative, a commissioner of the political police accompanies the Monarch, and, with agents brought from Berlin, reorganises the local service and becomes personally responsible for the safety of his Majesty. The expenses of this service, for which the

agents receive extra pay, are borne by the province which is honoured by the Imperial visit.

The predilection of William II. for travelling has given him the name of *Reisekaiser*—the itinerant Emperor. But this is not the only nickname which his faithful subjects have bestowed upon him. From the fact that in speaking freely of the sacred person of the Emperor, one runs the risk of bringing up against those famous articles of law relative to the crime of *lèse-majesté*, Germans have taken the precaution to designate their sovereign by names less compromising than his own. Sometimes they call him "Lehmann," a name as common throughout Germany as Durand or Dubois is in France, or Smith, Jones, or Brown, in England and in the United States; again they speak of him as "Siegfried Mayer" after the initials of the formula by which he is addressed—*sie Majestät.*

In this way, they can criticise their Sovereign and what he does without being constantly on the lookout for the ever-possible presence of a police spy.

Quite naturally it is in Berlin where they talk most about William II. and admire him the least. In spite of the affected enthusiasm at the beginning of his reign with which he expressed himself concerning his "faithful Berliners," the relations between the Emperor and the good city of Berlin have become less and less cordial. The municipality and the Court are far from agreeing. Through his idiosyncrasy of everywhere imposing his will, this will and that of a collection of two million souls are discordant. He has not forgiven the magistracy of the Capital for daring to oppose certain of his artistic innovations. He wanted certain statues placed here, monuments there, all quite at random, and the municipal councillors were not over-impressed with his ideas of æsthetic taste.

In three years the Kaiser twice refused to ratify the nomination of Councillor Kaufmann, as first burgermaster of Berlin. After the Kaiser's first refusal, Kaufmann was re-elected by a still larger majority. But the Emperor remained obdurate. The conflict might have raged for some time, if the one most interested, the burgermaster, tossed about between popular and Imperial will, had not taken it into his head to fall ill and die, and so end the conflict.

On this point, the attitude of the present Kaiser contrasts strangely with that of William I. and the great Frederick, the former of whom was fond of proclaiming himself, and was in fact, "the first servant of the State," and the latter, who, although he had differences with his subjects, always knew how to disarm them by his wit or humour.

One day Frederick saw some Berliners gathered before a poster which had been pasted on the palace walls. It was fixed too high and the more curious were obliged to crane their necks and stand on tiptoe in order to read it. The King sent out an aide-de-camp to investigate. The officer returned and announced that it was a placard censuring the King, and asked if it should not be taken down.

Tiefer hangen ("Let it be pasted lower down"), tranquilly cried the Prince.

It is a long call from Frederick the Great to the irreconcilable William II., who, deeming his person insufficiently protected by legislative force must needs reinforce it with the famous paragraph on the crime of *lèse-majesté*, which, although it permits German tribunals to inflict numerous iniquitous condemnations, has not added one jot of respect for the Crown among the people at large.

These methods are no longer of our age. It is an-

other example of how the injudicious sweeps away reason in William II.

Whether in Germany or travelling abroad, the Kaiser always has sent to him a report of the Parliamentary debates. When in Berlin, a Cabinet Minister furnishes him with a synopsis of what has been said. When travelling, a report is sent to him by telegraph. A high official in the Ministry of the Interior is charged with this work. These special documents not only make note of the questions discussed but also impart the results of the debates, together with all attendant incidents, even the interruptions. The official in question is present at the sittings and writes out an account under the form of "Parliamentary dispatch for the Emperor." A copy of his dispatch is forwarded by means of the pneumatic tube service to the Minister of the Interior or to his representative.

After each sitting a high post-office official calls for the Parliamentary dispatch in the Palace of the Reichstag. When it arrives at its destination, a copy is made and delivered—as is the case with all dispatches intended for the Emperor—while the original is deposited with the post-office in case it should be needed for comparison.

Very often the Emperor demands by telegraph supplementary details, which are furnished him by wire. Besides these dispatches, detailed and circumstantial reports are written out for the use of his Majesty and dispatched to him by couriers, who leave Berlin in the evening so that they may reach the Kaiser the next morning. If the debates of the Municipal Council of Berlin touch on questions of interest to the Emperor, —which very often happens,—he receives information about them in the same way.

William II. does not exclusively employ the wire

nor does he receive only telegrams. Every day the post brings him from six to seven hundred letters, which is just as many as the Czar receives, half as many as the King of England, and a thirtieth of what comes to the Pope, whose thirty-five secretaries, every day, take care of a formidable mail-bag of more than twenty thousand letters.

In his study, after eight o'clock every morning, the Kaiser, opens his voluminous mail. By nine, he has finished part of it, and goes out for his customary constitutional.

He enjoys the free use of the telegraph and mails all over Germany. The reigning Empress, the Dowager Empress, the reigning Princes of the Federation, Court officials, and managers of the royal theatres have the same privilege.

The Civil Cabinet is busiest as Christmas draws near. At this time of year, thousands of petitions arrive from all parts of the Empire. Many of them are sent by school children who have a favour to ask of their Emperor. All these requests are carefully made note of. In most cases, however, they are forwarded to the provincial presidents, who, in turn, pass them on to the municipalities whence they came, with inquiries concerning the financial circumstances and the morality of the petitioners, and the replies are returned to the Imperial Cabinet.

Every year the Emperor sends what would amount to sixty thousand marks' worth of dispatches, which may be separated into the following three categories: I. Personal telegrams; II. Telegrams dictated by the Emperor, or written at his direction by an aide-de-camp or a minister, but signed by him; III. Telegrams which bear the legend, "On behalf of the Emperor," or "By order of the Emperor," and receive the stamp

of a high official in one of the cabinets of his Majesty —Herr von Lucanus, for example. These dispatches are written on blanks of various shapes, but each bears the inscription: "Telegram from H. M., the Emperor." If the Kaiser is travelling in Germany, his telegrams bear the date and address of their origin and are forwarded by wire through the nearest telegraph office. The Imperial Palace in Berlin has an office for the exclusive use of his Majesty, which is open day and night. An aide-de-camp or a confidential valet brings there in a locked case all sealed envelopes. They are immediately deciphered and copied out and forwarded to the main office. It should be added that the telegraphic service of the Imperial Palace in Berlin is directly connected with the buildings at Potsdam.

The Berlin central office must enter the exact texts, the addresses, and all data that may expedite his Majesty's telegrams. Moreover, at the beginning of each month, a scrupulous committee of directors is organised. All originals arriving at the Palace office are transmitted to the central office. The latter registers them and forwards them to the Berlin Central Post-Office, where they are classified. The forwarding of Imperial dispatches coming from other German cities, follows the same rule. Official telegrams, whether they be sent abroad or whether their destination be within the Empire, are all at the expense of the German State.

If William II. still keeps up frequent communication with his allies, the German Federal Princes, his visits to their capital cities seem to be gradually falling off. One remembers that little rift in the lute of good fellowship between Baden and Prussia; also that lively discussion between the Prince of Lippe-Detmold and the Kaiser apropos of an interminable problem of

succession. That began five years ago, and the end is not yet.[1]

To take another example, the Kaiser's "great friend," the King of Saxony, has been in an embarrassing position since the matrimonial adventures of his son, which threw William II. into a violent rage. This is not to be wondered at, for he had always main-

[1] Carl Alexander, the nominal reigning prince of Lippe, is insane. He succeeded his brother, Prince Woldemar, March 20, 1895. Count Ernest of Lippe-Biesterfeld was appointed regent, and on his death in October, 1904, he was succeeded as regent by his son Leopold. The claim to sovereignty of the little State, which contains only 140,000 inhabitants, and is in theory as independent as Prussia, has long been contested between two families, Lippe-Biesterfeld and Schaumburg-Lippe. On the death of Count Ernest, the Schaumburg-Lippe family advanced their pretensions, which, as their head is the brother-in-law of the German Emperor, are formidable. The local Diet, however, supported by the whole population, insisted that the Biesterfeld family, though it had twice married below its rank, was legitimately possessed of the principality, and therefore declared Count Leopold, who is next of kin, Regent. Thereupon William II. wrote to the Count at Detmold as follows:

"I express to you my sympathy on the occasion of the death of your father. Since the legal situation is in no way cleared up, I cannot recognise an assumption of the regency on your part, and also I do not allow the troops to be sworn in."

Scarcely had this note been received than the Diet met in extraordinary session to consider the following bill proposed by the government *de facto:*

"In the event of the death of his Serene Highness Prince Carl Alexander, the Regency will continue to be exercised by Count Leopold of Lippe-Biesterfeld, Regent of the Principality of Lippe, until the definite decision of the renewed dispute with regard to the throne."

The special committee of the Diet had proposed an amendment, which ultimately took the form of a proposal that "if Prince Alexander should die within two years after the promul-

tained that royalty was composed of elements that were superior to those in the rest of mankind, and the shock of this disillusion, when he saw a real Princess descend to the plain of poor humanity, must have been very severe. In the subsequent quarrel between the married couple, he has always been against Princess Louise. At all events, he has, since the divorce, visited Dresden and has been hunting with the hereditary Prince in all the intimacy of their former comradeship.[1]

gation of this law, and if within that period a tribunal should not have been instituted for the settlement of the dispute, the Regency shall cease, and the procedure prescribed in Clause 3 of the Regency Law of April 24, 1895, shall take effect."

And now (November, 1904) complications have been intensified by the discovery of a secret treaty between the late Prince Woldemar, the last reigning prince of Lippe-Detmold and Prince Adolph George Schaumburg-Lippe devolving the succession to the Schaumburg line.—TRANSLATOR.

[1] The Saxon monarch referred to was King George, who died October 15, 1904. His eldest son, Prince Frederick Augustus, born in 1865, and an intimate friend of the Kaiser, is now King. The latter was married on November 21, 1891, to Princess Louise of Tuscany, who was born September 2, 1870. In 1902 she eloped with the French tutor of her children, M. Giron, and on February 11, 1903, a divorce was granted to her husband. Towards the end of October, 1904, petitions were signed in all parts of Saxony, and addressed to King Augustus, begging for the recall of his former wife. This matrimonial quarrel should not be confounded, as it often is in the newspapers, with that of Prince Philip of Coburg and his wife, Princess Louise, who is a daughter of the King of the Belgians. After her rupture with her husband, a year ago, Princess Louise of Coburg was confined in an Austrian insane asylum, whence (August, 1904) she managed to escape with the aid of her old admirer, Count Mattachich. The couple are now (October, 1904) in Paris, where she is attempting to break off all bonds which bind her to the royalty of Europe. In this campaign, it may interest the readers of this book to know, she is aided by the author, Henri de Noussanne.—TRANSLATOR.

For some time the Kaiser has not been seen in Munich. It is no secret to any one that there is a certain freedom of living and lack of conventionality at the Bavarian Court, which is not tolerated at Berlin. In Munich they criticise without restraint the autocratic and feudal pose as well as the mediævalism of William II. There, they do not take the German Emperor at all seriously, and they never let the chance slip to impress upon him lessons in common sense.

At the time of his last visit, William II. was anxious to enrich with his autograph the "Golden Book" of the city, and he wrote therein this legend: *Suprema lex regis voluntas* (there is no law other than the royal will). A few days later the book was brought to Prince Luitpold, the Regent of Bavaria, who jotted down the following aphorism: *Suprema lex salus reipublicæ* (the supreme law is the interest of the State).

Thus placed facing the snobbish Imperial inscription, the declaration of the Regent had striking significance. In Bavaria, where they have slight sympathy for Prussia, people consider it a most smarting rebuke to the Kaiser's insolent sentiment.

It is quite probable that his Imperial Majesty wrote sincerely, for, since that time, he has never returned to Munich.

CHAPTER V

WILLIAM II. AS THE HEAD OF THE ARMY

THE coldness between the Courts of Munich and Potsdam has been accentuated by two additional reasons. First, there was the introduction of the spiked helmet in the Bavarian army to take the place of the tufted helmet; second, there was the declination of official Bavaria to join in the commemoration of the battle of Sedan, when the anniversary of that great German victory was being vociferously celebrated throughout the Federation. Already, for several years, Bavarians had declined to celebrate a battle, which, if it signalised the welding together of the German Empire, at the same time marked the domination of their country by Prussia.

This species of anti-military rebellion cut William II. keenly, for he wished to pass as a great warrior. Ought he not to be one by atavism, as well as by inclination and education?

On the very morning of his wedding he was seen drilling his company of Grenadiers on the parade ground. Just one hour before the ceremony he turned the command over to a lieutenant and went to be married. The next day at sunrise he rushed off to Potsdam to decorate a subaltern. Such zeal is, of course, most admirable, but it must have left the young wife slightly surprised.

Since his accession he has actively occupied himself with the army and has even personally commanded the troops at the great manœuvres. He has made prodigious blunders, which people have set down to his youth and inexperience. Has he at length perfected himself in the profession of Frederick the Great? One may be permitted to doubt it.

Two years ago he seized the opportunity to give an example of his own particular strategy for the benefit of foreign officers, who were not less stupefied at it than were their German colleagues.

The Third and Fifth Army Corps, whose headquarters are respectively at Berlin and Posen, were to contend against each other at the manœuvres. The Fifth Corps occupied the heights near the town of Tempel. The Emperor, mounted upon a superb white charger, placed himself at the head of a dozen regiments of cavalry and hurled this mass of 7500 horsemen upon the Fifth Corps, which was fully entrenched in its formidable position. The cavalcade swept over the intervening space and finally crossed the lines of the enemy. Among other feats of valour, an entire brigade (the famous Hussars of Death) threw itself upon its own infantry.

It was then that General von Stulpnagel, commanding the Fifth Corps, was heard to repeat these bitter words: "'The Emperor wished to show off before his General Staff and the foreign officers; but the Emperor, gentlemen, is not Murat, and Tempel is not Borodino. We have just been witnessing some military 'nonsense.'" The euphemism is fine.

This stage strategy makes one think that the Kaiser does not attach very great importance to manœuvres, and that he sees in them nothing but a medium through which to display imposing spectacles, rather than truly

serious tactic movements. Moreover, one is also forced to believe that in his exhibitions on the sea he is just as much lacking in common-sense as on land; take for example his exploit at Cuxhaven in September, 1902.

After a violent cannonade carried on by the forts against the German squadron, which in actual warfare would certainly have caused great havoc among those vessels, the Kaiser, on his yacht, placed himself at the head of the attacking fleet, passed over the bar, and forced an entrance to the Elbe. Now everybody knows that the *Hohenzollern* is a vessel of luxury, especially fitted up for dress parades, and, at best, is armed with a few pieces of light artillery. Even though it bore a Cæsar and his customary good luck, preserved by some magician Merlin, one can hardly imagine him, in the twentieth century, daring to cross a line raked by shells and torpedoes. If, therefore, naval manœuvres are intended to serve as rational hypothetical experiments and not as aquatic exhibitions of horse-play, it is ridiculous to mix a yacht up in them, and against all likelihood and all the rules of war, to assume the airs of victory from the bridge of a pasteboard boat. Apropos of this incident, I am tempted to repeat, with a slight variation, the happy expression of General von Stulpnagel: "Naval nonsense."

There is no end to the lively interest that the Emperor takes in all matters pertaining to the army and navy. He has inaugurated a new manual of arms for the infantry, raked up hitherto unknown appendages for uniforms, and, with all possible ostentation, he regularly presents himself to hear the recruits sworn in. With his family and suite, he attends the presentation of colours, already provided and presented by himself in private. Very often he speaks to his favourite regiments words similar to those once addressed to the

second regiment of Grenadiers: "Soldiers, you are the Second Regiment, but you shall not be the second in honour and glory"; or again, here is a phrase which he has made familiar to recruits: "I have given you a fine uniform; be worthy of it"; this to the Third Regiment of Engineers: "I like the spirit of this regiment," he said November 25, 1891, "It is most excellent; it is entirely old Prussian." On March 2, 1898, he thus addressed some naval recruits and taught them the symbolical significance of the three colours of the German flag: "Black signifies toil and anguish; white days of celebration and of rest; and the red stands for the blood which so many of your predecessors have shed for our country."

These gems of thought and rhetoric and many others of the same kind constantly receive the fullest publicity through the news agencies, with the idea, more or less successful, of dazzling the people. They are not, however, anything extraordinary and suggest to intelligent persons a Joseph Prud'homme rather than a Demosthenes.

William II. looks upon himself as the father of his officers and as a comrade-in-arms of his "most revered" (*verehrten*) generals. In a cabinet order dated March 29, 1890, he informed the gentlemen who had received the honour to command his soldiers that they ought to pride themselves more on their character than on their social rank or birth. And he added this species of threat: "One may in fact find most excellent officers among the sons of the middle-class." Whether or not he had noticed that luxury and a taste for ease were spreading through the German legions, he grabbed his pen and dashed off the following cabinet order, under the date of January 1, 1900: "My dear lieutenants, I most sincerely recommend to you simplicity and mod-

esty in your daily life, and, at the same time, absolute devotion to your king by the complete service of all your physical and mental forces, in a work which knows no repose and whose aim and end are the maintenance and perfection of our troops."

From the very beginning of his reign he took the conviction that the more the soldiers were formed in the rough to obey automatically the orders of the noncommissioned officers, the more solid would be the German army. Thus German under-officers believed that they had received from his Majesty a mission to discipline their men by sabre or bayonet strokes. Bad treatment developed to such an extent in the German army and desertions became so numerous (about three thousand a year, or one for every one hundred recruits) that the Emperor was quite concerned, and began to ask himself whether the Prussian method was, after all, the best. He instituted investigations and consulted his generals, and finally, it is said, on the earnest solicitations of his faithful friend, Count Hoeseler, former commander-in-chief of the German "covering troops" in Lorraine, he ordered courts-martial to be more severe than formerly in cases of bad treatment. To this order is due those numerous condemnations of commissioned and noncommissioned officers whose cases, every day, occupy so much space in German military journals.

Unfortunately the Emperor did not pursue his sage idea for any length of time. He saw too many people, listened to too much conversation, and especially sought to quiet the complaints of his subalterns. He said to himself, and his observation is thoroughly human, that if he had all the officers with him—thirty thousand commissioned and eighty thousand noncommissioned—he naturally held all the military forces

in his hand. In these circumstances, what did three thousand desertions count in an effective force of six hundred thousand? Moreover, what did it matter if there was a little discontentment in the ranks, so long as those who gave orders remained deeply attached to their sovereign?

It so happened that in 1903 Prince Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, commander of the Sixth Army Corps at Breslau, wished to put down in a manner still more effective the cruel treatment inflicted on soldiers in German barracks. He found himself personally opposed by his brother-in-law, the Kaiser. The Prince sent in a report written in his own hand showing the miserable state of affairs, particularly among the Poles in the regiments of Eastern Germany. He could not do more, for already suspected of Polish proclivities—one of the gravest accusations which can be brought against a German general officer—Prince Bernard of Saxe-Weimar was requested to give up his command. This he did without further protest. Now do not all these things tend to show that if, indeed, William II. loves his officers, his soldiers, and, in a word, his army, he has for them exactly the same affection which one bears toward a useful machine, which, looked after with great care, may, should the occasion arise, be effectively employed —provided, of course, a skilled hand shall direct it.

CHAPTER VI

WILLIAM II. THE VIRTUOSO

BUT before all and beyond all, William II. is an artist. The *Simplicissimus* has compared him to Nero. That is a good deal to say; at the same time, the characterisation is not entirely devoid of justice. If the Kaiser does not play upon the lute or sing in public, he composes, he writes verses, and he looks for popular approbation and persuades himself that he is brimming over with talent. Still, he is a philanthropic Nero, one who is deeply pained to throw the Christians to the lions—as was the case with the Poles. He strives to appear a good man and would very much like to charm men, just as Orpheus charmed wild beasts. According to him, music is intended to soften manners and customs. At the time of the inauguration of the new University of Fine Arts, in November, 1901, the Kaiser, speaking to the celebrated violinist, Joachim, professor at the Berlin Conservatory, said: "You know what educational importance I attach to the art and cultivation of music. Especially would I have you understand it from the point of view of its effect upon mind and heart. Music purges, elevates, and forms the soul. I believe that the entire corps of teachers may comprehend and put into practice this theory, as you do yourself."

"The stage," he once said to the actors of the

Royal Theatre in Berlin, "is one of my arms of government."

The Kaiser's taste for music and dramatic art is as much the expression of a natural disposition as it is a deliberate intention to please the German character for which music is notably one of its more preferred recreations. At the same time it is well worth noting that the Imperial *dilettante* isolates himself from almost the entire body of his subjects in his lack of appreciation for the author of *Tannhauser*.

"I don't like Wagner," he has said. "He is too noisy. The simple, yet pleasant music of Gluck is much more to my taste."

William II. does not confine himself to the critic's *rôle;* he has lifted himself to that of the composer. His *Hymn to Ægir* is still famous, less possibly—is it necessary to say?—because of its intrinsic value than on account of the exalted position of the author. His other musical efforts cannot be judged. He has not yet produced them in public.

This tendency toward musical composition seems to be general in his family. His brother, Prince Henry, has written a "March" for the first division of the German fleet, and a melody for stringed instruments. Prince Joachim-Albert of Prussia, another member of the Hohenzollern family, collaborated in an opera *The Miracle of Spring*, which has been given at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels. The Crown Prince is a passable violinist. And finally, everybody knows that the Emperor himself is an excellent pianist, who can read at sight the most difficult pieces. Even during the grand manœuvres his Majesty has a piano close by at headquarters, and this cumbersome instrument also has a place of honour on board the Imperial yacht.

And beside being a composer and player, the Kaiser

has also revealed himself a musical conductor. When on a visit at Wendeck, December 6, 1900, he gave for the first time an exhibition—slightly vulgar for a King—by taking the place of the drum major of one of his regiments.

The brass band of a cavalry detachment from Breslau had played that day during dinner. After dinner was over the Emperor, accompanied by Prince von Donnersmark, Count von Waldersee, and General Count von Moltke, went up to the musicians and ordered them to play a piece dating from 1402, which Count von Moltke, who is an excellent musician, had discovered and arranged for German bands.

The rendering pleased William II. very much and he congratulated Herr von Moltke. Then he asked them to play some old cavalry parade marches. Then it was that, wishing himself to direct, the Monarch begged the leader to yield his baton to him, and, standing erect in the centre of the circle formed by the cavalry band, the Kaiser gravely beat out the time. Then he passed the stick over to Count von Moltke, saying: "And now you, my dear Moltke!" And the Count in his turn conducted the musicians.

On that day the descendant of Frederick the Great and the nephew of the skilful strategist must have made a touching sight.

The Emperor was delighted and returned on the morrow insisting on another performance. He remained for an entire hour and again deigned to conduct in person the execution of several pieces.

The same thing was repeated in the presence of Coquelin. This is how it happened: The Emperor was hunting on Prince von Fürstemberg's place, in Donaueschingen. On the express desire of the Monarch, Coquelin had been invited. One evening the

Emperor, the actor, and the rest of the guests were assembled in the drawing-room, where, on a platform, the band of a Cuirassier regiment was giving a concert fit to raise the dead. One only witnesses these things in Germany. All at once the Kaiser jumped up and rushed toward the musicians.

"Look!" said Count von Waldersee to the French actor, "we are going to see something interesting."

William II. had already seized the baton and was starting in to conduct in quick time the piece which, in his estimation, they were playing too slowly.

When he had finished the Emperor returned to his place and said, laughing: "I am glad to have been able to give a music lesson to my Cuirassiers."

Coquelin expressed his admiration in the following words: "Oh, Sire, what animation! What spirit! How in the world could your Majesty do it after such a fatiguing day in the field?"

"Monsieur," returned the Emperor. "One must always be capable of doing one's self what seems necessary. They were murdering that piece. Now everything in music depends upon the movement. Speak to me about those old German, Dutch, or French marches—that is where you have that delightful, expressive harmony which is so superior to your insipid modern compositions."

"Indeed, Sire, you are right."

"And do you know, Monsieur, what march I am inclined to prefer to all others?"

"Is it, fortunately, a French one?"

"Exactly so. The *Marche de Turenne*."

"Ah, Sire, I know it by heart. Bizet has introduced it in the musical portion of the *Arlésienne*."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, Sire."

"I should be curious to hear it. I do not know the drama. Promise me, M. Coquelin, to play the *Arlésienne* in Berlin."

"I pledge myself to do it, Sire."

"Depend upon it, I shall come to see you. I shall applaud you all the time."

And sure enough, when Coquelin returned to the German capital (January 23, 1902), he played the *Arlésienne*. The Emperor kept his promise and was present at the production of Daudet's masterpiece.

In spite of the preference which he has shown for old French marches, especially for those of Lulli, it is intimated that the Kaiser has expressed the intention of changing the music of Germany's national anthem, *Heit dir im Siegeskranz* (Hail to thee in thy Crown of Glory), for a cause which can be indirectly traced to the little Italian who, coming to France at the age of thirteen, was to live there all his life and become one of the greatest musicians in his adopted country. The national German anthem resembles *God Save the King*, the *motif* of which is by Lulli. That wearies William II. Consequently the order has gone forth to the *Kappelmeister* of the Guards regiments to submit to his Majesty schemes for a new anthem.

Not content with instructing musical conductors, this marvellous Monarch would fain teach eminent composers. He has yearned to climb to the summit of the Orpheusian Parnassus and has passed from military marches to grand operas. His dealings with the *Maestro* Leoncavallo bear witness to this.

In 1894, when Leoncavallo's *Medici* was being given at the Royal Opera, the Emperor had the composer presented to him and congratulated him. A week later Count Hochberg, manager of the Royal theatres, looked up the Italian musician and asked if he would

consent to write an opera drawn from a German historical theme.

"What theme, your Excellency?"

"Signor *maestro*, that is a matter for his Majesty to decide. I am only charged with ascertaining your consent."

"I am at his Majesty's orders."

Shortly after this, William II. sent for his manager of theatres and unfolded to him his scheme for a lyric drama. Forthwith, Count Hochberg informed Leoncavallo of the Emperor's proposition, which was that the Italian should write a piece for the Royal Opera, the theme of which was to be drawn from Willibald Alexis's novel, *Roland of Berlin*. Leoncavallo accepted the offer; but as he was unacquainted with German, he was obliged to have the Alexis romance translated together with certain historical works treating of the epoch. One is tempted to believe, with all due respect to the varied talents of William II., that either his subject or his enthusiasm was at fault, for the composer spent seven years in vain attempts to grasp the beauties of the Imperial idea.

As a relaxation from the arduous work imposed upon him, Leoncavallo, in the meantime, wrote two other operas: *Zaza* and *La Bohême*. But anxious to remain on good terms with his august collaborator, the Italian master had no sooner completed the score of *La Bohême* than he took it to Berlin to lay it at the feet of William II. He asked his Majesty for an audience. The Kaiser declared that he had waited seven years for Signor Leoncavallo and that Louis XIV. would not have waited that long. The *Maestro* would not be received until he brought *Roland of Berlin*. More and more anxious not to rupture the good relations which existed between Germany and Italy, Leoncavallo wrote

a letter to the Emperor in which he stated that the sole cause for the delay of *Roland of Berlin* had been the anxiety of the composer to have a work worthy of the Prince who had deigned to inspire him. His Majesty was touched, and he softened his heart sufficiently to accept a copy of *La Bohême*. But not long after the German consul at Milan received an order from the Emperor to ascertain from Leoncavallo at what time the opera would be finished. The composer replied that he would present himself with the work in Berlin in the course of the summer.

No one knows what impression the manuscript produced on this new Roland who governs Germany or whether the piece will be produced without Imperial retouches. It is learned, however, that the Kaiser wishes to modify the climax and make the piece end with a wedding. That, of course, is in accordance with the best traditions; for who can conceive of an opera that does not end with a marriage.

William II. is not content with merely inspiring and correcting *libretti*, he yearns to be a dramatic author. He collaborates with Commandant Joseph Lauff, whom he has ordered to write Hohenzollern plays. He does not confine himself to furnishing the plot; he plans situations, writes dialogues, furnishes incidents, and contrives effects. This is not all; he also busies himself with staging these pieces which are played at the Wiesbaden Theatre. He honours this establishment with his exalted patronage and is often present at the presentation of the plays on which he has worked.

Dramatic authors beyond the Rhine, at least those in Berlin, would truly be too greatly privileged, having a fellow-playwright for master, were they not obliged to reckon on the artistic and literary opinions of his

Majesty. Unfortunately for them, as Imperial censor he does not stay his hand from their productions. Nor is it merely the opinion of the Kaiser which confronts them, but also that of his Royal spouse, who very often has the final word concerning a dramatic work.

The journals have stated that the Empress spoiled several passages in Richard Strauss's opera *Feuersnot* and a piece by Wildenbruch, which would have caused the dismissal of Count von Hochberg. She would also demand that the new pieces destined for the Royal theatres should first be submitted to her. People have cried out against this alleged calumny, but at the time an interpolation on the *censura* was made in the Reichstag, a respectable deputy declared that he had his reasons for believing that the information was correct and he held these reasons trustworthy, in spite of every denial.

Moreover, it is a matter of record that Paul Heyse, whose drama, *Mary of Magdala*, was suppressed by the Berlin censor, has affirmed that this suppression was due, like that of many others, to the noble veto of the Emperor and Empress.

Neither festoon nor moulding is lacking from the artistic decoration in which his Majesty, William II., has framed the throne of the great Frederick. Musician, playwright, the Monarch is also painter, art critic, and connoisseur.

He possesses a fine collection of pictures done by the French masters of the eighteenth century. In the German section of the Paris Exposition of 1900 one had the opportunity to admire the Chardins, Watteaus, etc., which garnish the Imperial palace.

Not so very long ago these pictures had been deprived of their frames and relegated to the garret, owing to an affected disdain for French works. With

better inspiration, William II. had them set in silver frames, and placed in the apartments at Potsdam.

They are now in the company of canvases by German masters, some of which are modern, and a Frenchman who visits Potsdam has the felicity of hearing the palace guide designate these works of art in the following terms: "Picture by Professor Meyer! Picture by Professor Watteau!"

The appellation "Professor" Watteau certainly has unexpected charm. Not less characteristic, however, is the manner followed by William II. in choosing his works of art. An American paper, the *New York Mail and Express*, relates that the Emperor would even refuse admission at a Berlin museum to pictures by French painters such as Monet, Degas, etc. The paper adds: "The method adopted by the German Emperor when he wishes to purchase a painting is hardly in accordance with established usage. He has submitted to him a list bearing the names of the artists and the subjects of their paintings. His Majesty scratches out the names of all those who are not German."

The Imperial critic, however, owes it to his admirers to clear up certain symbolic phases of his own work, which have caused considerable discussion. We have, for example, a picture apropos of the expedition to China representing "Civilised Europe covered with shining armour holding at bay the barbarian Empire of the Middle Kingdom." In the Imperial study one may see a wash drawing, which is described as a "tombstone on which a woman lies extended." The surroundings of this design are rich in ornamentation. Below, written in the Kaiser's own hand, are these words: "Idea for a design of a mortuary monument in memory of Frau von Alvensleben-Neugattersleben, 20, XII., 1900."

It should be added in explanation of this delicate thought of his Majesty, that Frau von Alvensleben was a sort of German Mme. Récamier noted for her beauty, and that her husband, General von Alvensleben, who commanded the Third German Army Corps in the battles around Metz, is considered beyond the Rhine as the strategist who, by his tenacity and perfection of tactics, confirmed the German victory at a hazardous moment at Borny, St. Privat, and at Gravelotte.

There are also to be found in this same Imperial study the originals of allegorical compositions sketched out by the Emperor and touched up by Professor Knackfuss, each one in a heavy wooden frame: "People of Europe Guard Your Most Sacred Possessions," "Pax," "Neither For Nor Against," "To the Memory of Emperor William the Great," "In Hoc Signo Vinces." The study also holds a gigantic album filled with photographs of the Kaiser, in all poses and in all costumes, taken at every period of his life.

Occasionally William II. abandons his powerful conceptions of pictorial art—the value of which no one knows better than Professor Knackfuss—and occupies himself with more fanciful works. While this spell was on him, he had a set of curious playing cards made at Altenburg. The card representing the queen of hearts bears a portrait of Queen Victoria; the queen of diamonds is represented by Queen Marguerite of Italy; the queen of clubs, by the Empress Elizabeth of Austria-Hungary; the queen of spades, by the Czarina. As to the kings, they are represented as follows: the king of spades by the Pope; the king of clubs by King Humbert; the king of diamonds by Leopold II.; and the king of hearts by William II. himself.

The four knaves are four prominent European pre-

miers: Bismarck, Gladstone, Crispi, and Waldeck-Rousseau. Finally the four aces reveal the miniatures of the prettiest actresses in Europe. It is a shame that we do not know who they are.

The Kaiser is almost as prodigal with his drawings as he is with his autograph. He sent to Admiral Thommsen, commanding the North Sea naval station, two large water-colours showing the flags of the Prussian Army in days gone by, with those of the German Army of the present. He offered to the Reichstag an illustrated schedule on which one might see, drawn by the Imperial hand, a collection of miniature warships serving as a comparison between the naval forces of England and those of Germany.

Apparently the Kaiser has exhausted his supply of cartoons, for, desiring to honour the house of Prussian Lords with an artistic gift, he was constrained to satisfy himself by offering a symbolical statue: "The Crown Preserving Peace," but a sculpture of grand dimensions and imposing aspect. A smaller one was also presented by the Emperor—"William I. at the Age of Seven"—which will one day ornament some Berlin park.

These two objects of art have not yet left the august hand of William II., notwithstanding the fact that sculpture is most dear to the Imperial soul. His passion for the boasting-tool is not strong; instead, he has encouraged, stimulated, excited, and given full rein to the production of statuary whose proportions exceed the prescribed limits. For him all subjects are good which permit of heroic treatment. He has unearthed the most obscure persons of his epoch and has ranged statues of these illustrious unknowns in a military line along the *Sieges Allee* of Berlin for the delectation of foreigners and cockneys.

All over Germany statues rise from the earth like toad-stools in Limousin after an August storm.

Emperor William I. alone is to be met with 324 times in Germany [1]—moulded in bronze, cut in marble, afoot, on horseback, with drawn or sheathed sword, crowned or in helmet, and, whatever his pose he always has the air of a venerable landlord of a respectable tavern. In ten years' time the various Germanic countries have come into possession of more than five hundred statues of the " unforgettable grandfather," and new ones are set up every day.

And, as though all this marble and bronze might test the capacity of German soil, the Kaiser has entered into a scheme of exportation which, as we all know, is not appreciated by everybody. Rome has allowed herself to be inflicted with the statue of Goethe, and because of it, Barbey d'Aurevilly is probably gnashing his teeth in his tomb; but Washington did not especially care for Frederick the Great. This conqueror is still in the stage of endurance, while the German Consulate of the political capital of the United States is seeing what he can do for him.[2]

Speaking of statues, of all the instances which have served to reveal in William II. his ruling passion for cheap sensational art and his special delicacy of soul, none is more characteristic than the artistic incident at Barmen.

[1] Statistics of 1903.

[2] Since these lines were written, Congress in whose hands reposes the municipal government of the National Capital, while still declining to allow the statue to adorn a public park according to the wish of the Imperial donor, has, nevertheless, turned it over to the War Department as a fitting piece of ornamentation for the new Army War College grounds. There it was erected and guarded by marines down to the time of dedication (November, 1904).—TRANSLATOR.

A few years ago, the German Emperor inaugurated in this town a sort of Pantheon (*Rumeshalle*, or temple of Fame) in which were already the statues of William I. and Frederick III. Naturally a place had been left for the statue of William II. Without any false modesty, his Majesty informed the committee that it would not have to wait long for it. And sure enough, in 1902, the promised statue arrived at Barmen accompanied with the bill of the sculptor (Professor Begas) for 20,000 marks. The Barmenians had the sense to put a good face on the matter. They inaugurated the statue with much ceremony. It was the first "counterfeit presentment" of William II. to be erected in public. The Emperor was not present at the exercises. More 's the pity. He would have seized the occasion to say most charming things about himself with his accustomed modesty.

Although a protector of the arts, William II. is, for the artists themselves, a wilful and exacting friend. Last year Berlin painters organised a grand exposition. When the management began to take its first steps, the Kaiser ordered things to go no farther until the plans had been submitted to him. He also stipulated that he should be kept informed of what was going on in art circles other than those of Berlin. Up to that time Berlin artists had had the liberty of organising their exhibitions according to their own taste. But the Crown no longer thought this privilege proper. All the same, the relations between the Emperor and his favourite art furnishers have not become less cordial.

Either alone or accompanied by the Empress he visits the official artists. He likes to hold long conversations with them and impart to them the method by which the secret of art should be grasped. The unfortunate

fellow who, in a spasm of independence, dares to differ from the opinion of his august master may run the risk of being accused and condemned under the terrible article of *lèse-majesté.*

German artists have not forgotten the painful experience of the writer Bentz, of Munich, who was sentenced to two months' imprisonment for having freely expressed himself concerning his Majesty's ideas on art. The revelation was made in a confidential letter sent by Bentz to his "friend" Hartmann, who did not hesitate to communicate it to the Imperial prosecutor.

This is a national characteristic worth remembering. For the honour of humanity, be it said, there are few countries where justice would thus dare to make use of information furnished by a traitor. But in the present instance, who is most guilty—Hartmann, the prosecutor, or the Monarch who, thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances, permits prosecutions based on the most ignoble infamy?

Are my readers aware that this disturbing love for the fine arts, expressed by William II. has even given rise to diplomatic incidents? The most sensational had its origin in the famous dispatch recently addressed by the German Emperor, from Swinemunde, to the Regent of Bavaria, Prince Luitpold.

The Clerical majority of the Bavarian Landtag had refused to vote a credit of 100,000 marks for the budget of Fine Arts. Instantly, William II. picked up his Toledo pen and telegraphed in such terms that the Bavarians saw in them an anti-constitutional interference on the part of the Prussian king in the affairs of Bavaria. The Imperial missive provoked most fierce polemics and was the cause of a fiery interpellation in the Landtag of Munich. The interpellation finally led to the fall of Count Crailsheim, president of the Ba-

varian Council of State. The Kaiser's dispatch was couched in the following language:

"To His Highness, Prince Regent of Bavaria:

"Swinemunde, August 10, 1901.

"On returning from my travels, I read with inexpressible astonishment that the sum which you had asked for the Fine Arts budget has been refused you. I hasten to express to you the indignation that I feel against this odious ingratitude which touches the house of Wittelsbach, quite as much as it does your own august person, who is so well-known as a protector of the Fine Arts. I request the permission to place at your disposition the sum necessary to realise the task in the domain of art which you have imposed upon yourself.

"William I. R."

Incensed by the tone of this message, Bavaria flamed up in anger, but fortunately the Prince Regent knew how to arrange things. He had the cleverness to decline in excellent terms the Artaxercean gift; and the difference between his reply and the dispatch which inspired it is more notable because it exactly represents the difference which exists between the Germans of the South and those of the North. The latter are always barbarians and "gaffers," however their surface may be veneered over with a certain culture; the former are refined and well informed notwithstanding the roughness of their Teutonic exterior:

"To His Majesty Emperor William:

"I hasten to express to you my most profound gratitude for your generous offer and for the particular

interest which you take in me and my house and our plans in the domain of art. At the same time, I am happy to inform you that, thanks to the generosity of one of my Councillors of State, who has offered the sum refused, my government, in a certain way, still remains faithful to the traditions of my house and my people and is enabled to pursue one of my most noble aims, which is the cultivation of the Fine Arts.

"LUITPOLD, PRINCE OF BAVARIA.

"CHÂTEAU DE FISCHBACH, August 11."

After this incident, one may ask with a certain curiosity whether the Bavarians consented to furnish immediately the credit of 100,000 marks. They did not. The lesson which William II. had yearned to give Bavaria, had no other result than to increase the already existing coldness of the best Germans of the South towards the royal domains of the Kaiser's august person.

Still, one must be just. There are times when William II. himself perceives the importunity of those artistic manifestations of which he is the instigator or merely the pretext. The city of Constance, in Baden, had built a new military club-house. In the pediment, over the main entrance, appeared this pompous inscription in letters of gold:

IMPERATORE GUILELMO GLORIOSISSIME
REGNANTE ÆDIFICATUM.

After a short space of time, the inscription disappeared. One may imagine the local emotion which

was aroused by its suppression. Who had the audacity, the sacrilege, thus to efface the eulogy to his Majesty? A Constance paper inquired if, by chance, the officers had not realised that they had been a little premature in considering that up to that time and for henceforth the reign of William II. had been and would continue to be the most glorious? The *Francfort Gazette*, which has the reputation of getting its information in high places, replied as follows:

"It is reasonable to suppose that an intimation, emanating from a very high source, has made the officers understand that, *for the present*, the grand duchy of Baden has another sovereign besides Emperor William II."

"For the present" is a pearl. But the *Francfort Gazette* has a reputation for being a past-master in the art of subtleties.

The smallest differences in manners and customs among his peoples arrest the attention of the Kaiser. There is in Germany a singular question of orthography, concerning which philologians and grammarians have argued themselves hoarse. Should towns like Cologne, Cassel, and Constance, be spelled in German Köln, Kassel, and Konstanz, or Cöln, Cassel, and Constanz? The inhabitants of these worthy cities are generally for the K. and philologic argument seem to support their claim, and it has come about that certain representatives of Cologne have asked official permission of the administrative authorities to write Köln and not Cöln. They were about to gain their point, when it transpired that the Emperor was for C., and so Cologne was obliged to remain Cöln.

What reason did the Emperor have for supporting the C.? He argued that historically these cities, which had been founded by the Romans, have a Latin termin-

ology which excludes hard consonants; and William II. is ever ready to conform to tradition. Is not the German Empire of to-day, in the eyes of his Majesty, the continuation of the Empire of Charlemagne, of that of Constantine the Great?

CHAPTER VII

WILLIAM II. AS PREACHER AND POET

WILLIAM II. being *Summus Episcopus* of the Lutheran Church has taken his mission very seriously, and his performances as pope of the Reformation frequently manifest themselves and, very often, in a most picturesque manner.

Ten years ago he fixed thirty minutes as the maximum time for the sermons of the Court preachers; and, a little later, being desirous of revealing to them the formula for true sacred eloquence he himself set a most formidable paradigm for their edification.

Of all his sermons, the one which occasioned most noise was delivered at the time of the expedition to China, June 23, 1901, before the crew of the *Hohenzollern* piously assembled on the deck of that vessel.

His Majesty had chosen for his theme the following title: "Concerning the Necessity of Prayer."

He made erudite allusions to the trials and tribulations of the Israelites in the desert, to the prayers of Moses and Aaron, which gave victory to the children of Abraham over the Amalekites—in short the Exodus appeared to have no secret for him. Like Elias or Ezekiel, for the moment, the Kaiser himself seemed to be inspired and it was in tones of the most exalted ecstasy—such as Sarah Bernhardt has made familiar in all the capitals of the world—that he cried: "God has

put bells of prayer in the hearts of all men. When the sun of good fortune continues to illuminate the human life, too often they remain silent. But when tempests come, when misfortune comes, they ring, they ring, they ring. . . ."

"Bells of prayer. . . ." The idea is happy. From whom did he borrow it?

As the religion of the German Emperor particularly appeals to the gallery, he is fond of declaring that his people are the most devout in the world. Mahometans themselves are as unbelievers when compared to the pious Germans. In a speech addressed to the burgermaster of Aix-la-Chapelle, June 19, 1902, the Kaiser cried: "Pope Leo XIII. has said to my Ambassador, General von Loë, that the country where the finest order, the most perfect discipline, where respect for superiors, and fear of God prevail, was our country of Germany."

This declaration made a certain noise at the time. But if one may credit a semi-official communication in the *Osservatore Romano*, by the Pope or rather his mouthpiece, the Cardinal Secretary of State Rampolla, Marquis del Tindaro, that eulogy of Germany had not been so categorically stated.

William II. took care not to rectify the "mistake." Why should he? The effect produced on German Catholics had been most excellent. Was not the fear of God the foundation-stone of the Empire? His Majesty had practically asked: "Are not Germans the chosen people?" What would be the use of adding anything which might lessen the good reputation of Germany in the religious world?

William II., faithful to what he believes to be his mission, "secretly" distributes from time to time a few thousand marks for the restoration of churches or tem-

ples. But it is understood among the architects employed that they shall allow it to transpire that the Emperor is interested in the undertaking. A knowing wink is sufficient; and the papers are instantly filled with "indiscretions," and the good souls of Germany bless William II.; so generous and so secret in his deeds.

It is known that he has restored the entrance to the Metz Cathedral. Through fear that "his faithful Lorrainers" might not be quick enough to appreciate the noble thought of his Majesty, the Kaiser, in a speech addressed to the chapter of the cathedral, told the canons that the restoration of religious monuments had been one of the most cherished ideas of his ancestors. Had not the great Charles, his grandsire, begun the construction of their church! "And now," added the Emperor with rising emotion, "I trust that it shall be given to me, his unworthy successor, to see it rebuilt before the evening of my life."

In the meantime, the architect had received orders to glorify on either canvas or marble the delicate design which had inspired the Emperor. The artist was a man of genius, he proved this by boldly depicting on one of the sides of the restored portal, the Prophet Daniel according to the faithfully reproduced features of his Majesty, Emperor and King! The illustrated papers of the entire world published this counterfeit of the Biblical prophet with its heavenward pointed moustaches—*Est ist erreicht!* This new Daniel has had universal success. The only man who has not laughed but keeps on smiling with a noble, satisfied air is he who, if he only knew the world better, would realise that he was the butt of it every day of his life.

Other churches, like those of Marienburg and Wartzburg, have benefitted by the Imperial attention to such

an extent that Protestants do not see, without a certain irritation, the marked preference which the Emperor betrays for Catholic sanctuaries.

Preacher and restorer of religious monuments, William II. has also planted his flag upon the difficult ground of apologetics. In a long letter addressed to his friend and former minister of marine, Admiral Hollmann, member of the council of the German Society of the Orient, he has disputed the ideas advanced by Professor Delitzch on the interpretation of the "Old Testament." Delitzch who is an erudite Assyriologist, was not far from affirming in his lectures that the Bible of the Hebrews had its source in Assyrian and Chaldean tradition, quite as much as in hypothetical divine revelation. At least part of these lectures of the distinguished scholar were delivered before the Empress and Emperor. They were entitled: "*Babel und Bibel*" (Babylon and the Bible). The Emperor seemed to show great interest in the ideas of the Professor. It was believed that he was not far from approving of them, for, after one lecture in which Delitzch had declared his positivist theory in a fashion more pointed than usual, the Emperor went up and shook hands and talked with him for some time.

But, as is often the case with the Kaiser, he was playing a bit of childish duplicity which would have made a watchful analyst smile. At heart he was hostile to the ideas of Delitzch. Doubtless he feared that such deductions might strike consternation among the consciences of the faint-hearted. He drew up, therefore, an answer to these lectures in a letter which has remained celebrated. It was not only reproduced in the newspapers, but was published in the form of a pamphlet and circulated to the extent of thousands of copies in Germany and abroad.

From the very first, opinion was divided as to the origin of the document. Some people attributed it to certain distinguished theologians, from whom the Emperor had, we were assured, requested certain projects of which he later availed himself. On this point his detractors gave most precise details. It is said that two definite versions having been retained, the Emperor chose the one which conformed most to his personal ideas. He only made, here and there, a few unimportant corrections before turning it all into the form of a letter to the admiral.

These hypotheses on the origin of the august and pious missive were not slow in receiving denials by an official note. One was not permitted to suppose that the Emperor was utterly incapable of finding and constructing, all by himself, theological arguments.

"We learn," said the journals of the time, "that the Imperial letter to Admiral Hollmann, was entirely thought out during last Sunday and written down in the space of a few hours." That is the explanation that now receives official acceptation. The historical point is established.[1]

[1] In the first part of his letter to Admiral Hollmann, the Emperor reproaches Professor Delitzch with having left purely scientific ground and intruding upon dogmatic questions for the purpose of making a hole in Divine revelation, and he reproves the professor for having made his declarations to a public which was already more or less disturbed by matters of faith. In the second part of the epistle, which is more interesting for our purpose, the Emperor gives an explanation of his personal ideas on the question and makes his confession of faith:

"I recognise," he writes, "two species of revelations: A *continuous, incessant* revelation which is in a way *historical;* and a purely religious revelation preparing the coming of the Messiah. Concerning the first, I have this to say: As far as I am concerned there is not the least doubt that God incessantly

Thus the religious opinions of William II. in regard to the Revelation have received the greatest publicity. One may judge by the accompanying text whether these opinions are lucid and adequate enough to regulate the daily life and support the beliefs of the inner

continues to reveal Himself to the human race which He has created. Full of paternal love and interest for His creatures, He follows the development of humanity in order to guide and elevate it; sometimes He reveals himself in one person, sometimes in another — in a sage, a priest, a king — whether among pagans, Jews or Christians. Hammarabi was one of these inspired ones. Moses, Abraham, Homer, Charlemagne, Luther, Shakespeare, Goethe, Kant, and the Emperor William the Great were others. He chose them and considered them worthy to accomplish magnificent imperishable things, either in the intellectual or the physical domain, according to His will. How many times has my grandfather expressly affirmed to me that he was merely an instrument in the hand of the Lord! God gives people the works of great minds in order that they may profit by them in their development. Without doubt He informs himself as to the status of the various peoples and of their degree of civilisation. He revealed himself to different nations in diverse manners and He continues to do the same thing to-day.

"The second form of revelation — that which is rather religious than otherwise—has to do with the presence of God on earth. It began gradually with Abraham; it looked toward the future with omniscient gaze, for otherwise humanity would have been lost. The tribe of Abraham and the people who grew out of it considered, with a logic of iron, the belief in the one and only God to be the most sacred of principles. Thanks to the direct intervention of God these people were able to resist and to be born again. And thus this belief continued through centuries until at length the Messiah announced by the prophets and the Psalmists appeared as the grandest revelation of God on earth. For He caused to be recognised in His son, that Christ is God, God in human form, who was to save us, exhort us, and guide us. We feel how His fire consumes us, His mercy fortifies us, His anger annihilates us, and how His

man. Nothing is revealed by them but this: William II. is a deist who is strongly impregnated with the supernatural.

Still, if he may be classed among spiritualists, he in most assuredly against spirits, at least, since the

intercession preserves us. Certain of victory, confident in His word, we pass over hardship, disdain, misfortune, misery, and death, for we have received the word revealed by God who never dies. That is my opinion on this question. For us protestants, especially, the word has become everything, thanks to Luther. It is plain to me that the Old Testament contains a great number of chapters which, having an historical character that is purely human, are not 'the revealed word of God.' These are the descriptions of events of all kinds which took place among the people of Israel, in the political, religious, moral, and intellectual life of the Jewish nation.

"Take for example, the declaration from Mount Sinai which can only be symbolically considered as inspired by God, since Moses was obliged to restore the texts of the laws—probably known for a long time and even doubtless derived from the Hammarabian Code—in order to bind and blend together the elements of his people whose varied and relaxing factions did not offer great resistance. Here the sense or text may permit the historian to find a connection between the laws of Hammarabi, the friend of Abraham, which is perhaps logically just. That would never destroy, however, the fact that God guided Moses and thus revealed Himself to the people of Israel.

"My opinion, therefore, is that our good professor would do well, in the future, not to discuss the origins of religion in the lectures which he delivers in public, but that, on the contrary, he may properly speak of the religion, manners, and customs of the Babylonians and compare the accounts with those given in the Old Testament.

"For me, the following conclusion appears to be most concise and inevitable: A. I believe in the one and only God; B. To learn of Him men have need of one *form* and that is particularly the case with our children; C. Until now this *form* has been the Old Testament in its millennium tradition.

"Thanks to researches and investigations conducted almost

notorious affair of Anne Rothe, that adventuress who made all Berlin run after her by claiming to possess a certain magic power which permitted her to draw from her corsage oranges, flowers, vegetables, and a thousand other things which are not usually found in such a place. Her cunning finally went too far; she was convicted of fraud, and later being adjudged insane she was shut up in an asylum.

On this occasion, the Emperor formally declared to Herr von Windheim, president of police, and to Herr Faber, general superintendent of the Protestant Church, that he would no longer receive at Court any one who by his influence protected modern *thaunaturguses*, who pretended to cure disease by incantations, or who boasted of being in communication with invisible spirits and succeeding in making them speak by means of nocturnal table rapping, when the best they could do was to produce a series of dissolving views in a favourable obscurity.

There are times, perhaps, when in the deep recesses of his heart, William II. is moved by mysticism and excessive religious zeal, but it is probable that, while

everywhere on new inscriptions frequently brought to light, this *form* will certainly be subjected to material changes. But all that matters little. And even though the aurela of the Chosen People loses something of its brightness; that should not disturb us. The centre and source of the rays, God and His deed, remain untouched.

"One would not know how to found religion on science. Religion has its foundation in the human soul and results quite naturally from the soul's intercourse with God.

"Your faithful friend,

"WILLIAM, I. R."

"P. S. You may give the widest publicity to these lines. All who would like to read them should be able to do so."

Admiral Hollmann did not fail to do it!

disposed to admit that religion is a necessity for the people and for the maintenance of the Empire, he does not, in his conscience, judge it so good and indispensable for himself.

Is he a Protestant? Is he a Catholic? He does not even know himself, and the Lutherans who reproach him with coquetting with the Vatican, and the Catholics, who distrust him on account of his Protestant origin, have the same right to suspect him.

Have not certain persons alleged, and the fact seems to have been established, that like his father Frederick III. and his uncle Edward VII. he is Grand Master of the Free Masons of his Empire? When further on, we come to study him in the light of his mentality, we shall clearly see that his conception of a Divinity is in accord neither with Catholic nor Protestant dogma. For him there is a German God; it is the old God of the Scandinavians, the trinity of Odin, Thor and Frigga. A curious conception! one will say. That, nevertheless, is the God of William II., which, be it understood, he does not acknowledge.

When he has time to be one, William II. is a poet. His *Ode to Ægir* has been translated, but already people may have forgotten it. Although a work of the Emperor, it is none the less subject to the inexorable law of oblivion which weighs heavily upon all commonplace literary productions. The ode begins thus:

Oh, Ægir, god of fleets of might,
Before whom kneeling bends Undine;
Behold, how in the morning light
The hero troop of braves implores thee.

In setting out for cruel war,
Upon a far, far distant strand,
Through tempests, rocks, and reefs, and more,
Guide us towards the foeman's land!

If the Dragon seeks to bend us,
Be for us a guarding glave,
And may thy eye of flame defend us
From the furies of the wave.

And just as Frithjof on Ellida
Crossed in confidence thy sea,
May you be for us a leader,
We, the sons of thy army.

. . . . . .

And so the song goes on, full of mythological allusions to the fabulous heroes of Valhalla and to their not less fabulous strifes. As a poet, William von Hohenzollern has not made perceptible progress since he wrote on literature to his professor, Herr Vogt, concerning the style of the rhetorician.

Occasionally the German Emperor, leaving the ethereal regions of the Valkyrs and discarding buskin and frock, condescends to make personal poetry and honours with some more or less happy verses a friend, a familiar of the palace, or a gentle toiler whom he wishes particularly to reward. Thus it was with the painter Menzel, who had composed for Sans-Souci, a canvas representing William II. and his Court in costumes contemporaneous with Frederick the Great. The Emperor was so much pleased with the picture that he invited the artist to dinner. Before sitting down, he welcomed him by these verses inspired by the Imperial Muse:

The painter Menzel has arrived. The man
On guard makes note of him in his report.
And we have deigned, with honour quite peculiar,
To render honour to him known by all,
Who for Prussian King and host doth give
To us, with all the art of master hand,

These portraits true to spirit and to age,
Which consecrated by such power of art,
That true and living they will always be
Even in those distant days ahead.
The present time in which our artist lives
Is commonplace, degenerate, and dull;
But how the work of Menzel shows the soul,
For he has painted the heroic past.
See how before his sure and certain gaze,
That past begins to come to life again,
Renewed. And see how he doth give again
The life to beauties that we thought were dead!
In puffing skirts and powdered hair and lace,
He costumes thus our beauties of to-day.
Look where the soldier's glance with fire burns
From officers in elegant *perruques;*
Nought but interest guides the artist's hand.
And how all glitters, gleams, and seems lit up!
Enough of such a picture none can see,
So worthy of the beauties he has made.
And mayest thus esteemèd master gaze
Ever upon heroic times of old—
Those times that first to thee did give renown
Have now from thee a loving crown received,
Decked with the shining light-beams of thy art.
To what high value hast thou now attained,
Thy mistress, Art, hath shown to us to-day.
Behold thyself in prime of manhood's strength.
May God, for us, accord thee many years,
With many pictures new to paint for us,
Under the spreading Prussian eagle's wings!

. . . . . .

Behold now, venerated master Menzel,
For thus thy king his homage would bestow.
'T is done; and nothing more have I to say,
Save that thy king doth honour thee to-day.

The Emperor having read these amateur verses, did the honours at the dinner which followed, and then regaled Menzel with a concert. The Imperial poet reached

the climax of his goodness when he offered an autograph copy of these strophes to the painter already the object of so many precious favours.

There is no exaggeration in believing that his Majesty thought that his poem was beyond price, quite as much because of its literary value as on account of the august signature that terminated it.

History does not relate whether Menzel, who has always sold his pictures at the highest possible prices, was satisfied with his payment in doggerel.

CHAPTER VIII

WILLIAM II. AND LOVE

IS William II. what would be called "a lady's man?" To this question one may reply: "Yes and no."

Before his accession to the Imperial throne and during the first years of his reign, or up to his thirtieth year, he lived a rather varied and lively life. Discreet and vague allusions of the satirical journals of the time have not revealed much that is of importance concerning the Imperial amours, but the confidences of one of the Kaiser's former mistresses, Countess von Wedel, have thrown some light on the mysteries of the heart of this autocratic German.

One may recall this noble lady of the German aristocracy, whose divorce caused a sensation in Berlin some fifteen years ago. Although of the same sort as a certain American ex-countess, she did not have sufficient impudence to exhibit herself on the stage; still, when she saw herself abandoned by her titled lover, who, by the way, did not exclusively enjoy her favours, she revealed their secret relations and thereby laid bare the heart of an adventuress. In the course of five hundred pages of a *livre à scandales*,[1] she expatiates upon the detached and coarse society which surrounded her changing life and where it elbowed, to a more or

[1] *Meine Beziehungen zu S. M. Kaiser Wilhelm II.*, by Elisabeth von Wedel. Zurich: Published by Schmidt.

less degree, the principal German personalities of the last part of the nineteenth century. It is in this way that she relates how the Emperor—then Prince von Hohenzollern—was one of her lovers. It is unnecessary to say that the volume which was published in Zurich was seized in Germany the moment it crossed the frontier from Switzerland, and was suppressed by order of the Prussian police.

Would you like to have an idea of the book? Here, for example, is a scene which took place in Berlin in the middle of 1887. The Countess lived then at the Persian Embassy, the Ambassador being one of her "friends."

"For several weeks," she writes, "I had been literally snowed upon by a flurry of anonymous letters, which had come directed either to my own house or to that of the Ambassador. I burned them at once, they were so vile and filthy. At length, however, I grew impatient and spoke to the Ambassador about them.

"'We shall be able to find out their origin,' he said to me, 'if I apply myself to the chief of police, Herr von Richthofen, under pretext of asking him for information concerning your doings.'

"The idea pleased me. It was at once prudent and malicious. So the Ambassador wrote a letter to the police, to which he received this reply:

"'This lady (myself) is the notorious wife of Count von Wedel. For some time she has been in intimate relations with Prince William von Hohenzollern. . . .'"

After certain details concerning the aforesaid relations, the letter ended as follows: "The antecedents of this lady are not entirely clear.

"(Signed) VON RICHTHOFEN,
"President of Police."

"I received this missive from the hands of the Ambassador and translated it to him; then I went to the telephone. It was a matter of five minutes.

"'Hallo!'

"'Who is it?'

"'Countess von Wedel—Persian Embassy. Put me in communication with the chief of police, Herr von Richthofen.'

"'Here he is. What do you wish?'

"'I should like to speak with Herr President of Police, and to know at what time he will be able to receive me?'

"'To-morrow, between eleven and one.'

"At the time set, I was in the private office of the president of police. I drew the letter from my pocket and laid it on the table before him: 'Here,' I said right in his face, 'is what brings me. You took the trouble, Herr President, to send this letter to the Persian Embassy. Where do you get the right to give your impressions of my private life?'

"'Madame, it is my right as president of police.'

"'What is this "not entirely clear" past of which you speak? Are you acquainted with me? Have you ever spoken to me once in your life?'

"'I have never seen you until to-day; but you are known in Berlin and at Potsdam. Just now you occupy the heart of Prince William of Prussia, on the heels of Countess Hohenau, a relative whom the Prince has been looking after (*unterhalt*) for some time past. But I assure you, Madame, that all favourites fall, and you will be the first. With your cleverness you may do us harm in the affairs of State. It is time for you to vanish. Do you understand me?'

"'I swear to you, Mein Herr President, that some day I shall be able to unmask your manœuvres, just

as I unmasked those of your predecessor, President von Madai. If I am ever able to throw light upon your system of back-stair spying and the Court favourites with whom you work, you may be sure that I shall not hesitate to do it.'

"'When you please, Madam,' he returned ironically. 'Moreover, we are perfectly well informed concerning Prince William; we follow from morning till night every step he takes. Not long ago, you were seen at the Imperial *château* of Potsdam.'

"'Pardon me. It was a year ago.'

"'The Prince had you brought there by his aide-de-camp, and you were in his apartments.'

"'That is an odious lie, Herr President. I was escorted by a high Austrian officer, and we visited the Prince's apartments by permission of his Highness. At that time the Prince was in Berlin. You are slandering me, and I protest.'

"With his perpetual ironical smile and automatic gestures, the President of Police drew from a file a document on the face of which was a woman's photograph. 'Each time,' he continued, 'a woman sends a photograph to the Prince the police gets hold of it or a copy and puts it in an album which is also filled with love-letters and post-cards. With the photographs are various papers annotated in pencil.'

"'That is how,' I cried, 'your Black Cabinet works against Prince William?'

"'We make notes, Madame, concerning every conspicuous person. As far as you are concerned, we have full information *à propos* your rendezvous with the Prince, the number of times he has visited you, and the length of his visits. We are exceedingly well informed.'

"'If your agents have furnished you with such pre-

cise reports, Mein Herr, you ought to know what generals were with me in company with the Prince and how many there were!'

"'We are acquainted with all these details, just as we know that the Prince has very often been alone with you. Believe me, Madame, do not try to see him again.'

"And the President resumed his ironical tone and related to me a number of things; there was so much maliciousness in his words that I suddenly confronted him almost bursting with rage. I declared to him that Prince William should not long be kept in ignorance concerning the doings of his Black Cabinet. His Highness should also know who was spying upon him, and that those agents who reported the most scandalous information received a bounty of three marks.

"'You are astonishingly well informed,' the President replied. 'Who can have kept you *au courant* of all these details?'

"'Yourself, just now, Mein Herr; and have a care, for I have the ear of the Prince and he shall learn everything.'

"'We shall know how to prevent it.'

"'Yes? You and your agents?' and I began to laugh in my turn.

"'No, some one else!' replied the President.

"'Oh, yes, I see. Your friend, Count Waldersee. I congratulate you.'

"'Now see here, Madame, do you imagine that you will be able to hold us to account for the exigencies of our service?' softly insinuated Richthofen.

"His face had become pale. But without replying, I turned the door-knob to go out. He arose, and, as I left the room, I heard him fall back into his seat more or less disturbed, as he certainly had reason to be.

"Count Waldersee was therefore behind those anonymous letters. I had at last discovered what I was bent on knowing. . . ."

From that day forth, Countess von Wedel vowed an implacable hatred against Count Waldersee without seeking to know whether he had not been acting on superior orders.

Later, when the love of Prince William seemed to have cooled, she revealed to him the intrigues of the German general, and, at the same time, complained to her Imperial lover of the semi-desertion in which he had left her. Thereupon there arrived from Potsdam a burning epistle, written in the hand of the future Kaiser:

"In order that you may never again doubt my love, I send, you, Countess, this ring which I place on your finger. It is made of two little links fastened together. They will remind you that it is thus with our love—for life.

"WILLIAM, PRINCE."

The letter is dated February, 1888, a few months before the accession of the son of Frederick III. to the Imperial throne.

Promises of love are like flames in straw. Once Emperor, and his Majesty William II. quickly forgot the vows of his Highness Crown Prince William. "For however great may be kings, they are but human after all—"

Pour grands que soient les rois, ils sont ce que nous sommes.

Nevertheless, the pair kept up relations, at least by correspondence, until 1893, when Madame de Wedel started for America.

According to a letter signed by the Court's steward, Miessner, who served, it appears, as a go-between for the former lovers, William II. made over to the adventuress, at that time, an allowance which did not exceed 1800 marks a year. Madame de Wedel was satisfied with this pittance, and thanked her noble and generous friend, January 27, 1893, by an acrostic composed of the letters forming the sweet name of *Wilhelm !*

Besides Countesses Hohenau and Von Wedel have there been others? In Berlin, gossip on this point is general, and the belief in the best informed circles is that, while the Emperor usually behaves himself, he has not despised certain discreet diversions.

In noting his frequent journeys to Italy, certain papers have pretended that his care of state affairs has not always been the magnet which drew him thither. They mention the name of a Countess Minghetti, whose sculptural beauty and marvellous smile have literally magnetised the thirty-five years of the Emperor and King. But this and other stories like it may be mere *médisances.*

In short, is the Kaiser a passionate man? Quite the contrary. His whole life and individuality offer a most convincing denial. To be sure he may have yielded to occasional temptations, but his fantastic humour added to an innate desire for respectability, so dear to his vanity, have preserved him from too dangerous personal alliances.

On certain occasions, it has been noted that he has paid marked attention to this or that woman; but these affairs have rarely carried him beyond the bounds of innocent flirtation, or of intellectual attachment; they have quickly passed and left no smirch upon the duties of husband and father who returned to the conjugal fireplace without any remorse occasioned by the

feebleness of human nature. In this respect, he is scarcely "Parisian."

Has he ever been in Paris? Yes. The reports of the police establish the fact that he has been there several times. They mention a certain hotel R——, a respectable hostelry in the middle of the capital which receives once a year, in summer, a visit from the German Emperor, coming *incognito*. On these occasions, he usually takes the name of one of his estates—never the same—and in this way thwarts the pryings of the curious as well as the indiscretions of the French political police. His presence would be even less known in Paris, if the German police did not pass the word along to their rivals on this side of the Seine. Our guest, they say, will only remain a week among us, sandwiched in between two appearances at his *château* of Urville, in Lorraine, where he is officially domiciled at this time. His larks in Paris always fill with consternation the eight or ten police inspectors, who are attached to his august person. What curious diplomatic complications would be produced if an attempt were made against his Majesty in France, when people believe him to be in Lorraine!

But how much truth is there in all this? Let others say. Here is, however, an anecdote which is current in Paris newspaper offices:

A certain journalist, who is assigned to writing up various gossip of the city, and the reports of interesting trials, has a brother who occupies a high position in the Parisian police. Two years ago he was talking with him towards evening, when suddenly his brother asked him, in a sort of joking way:

"What would you give me, if I arranged so that you could see in one hour the Emperor of Germany?"

"The Emperor of Germany? In Paris?"

"In Paris. Come with me."

The two brothers made their way to the Eastern Station, where the 7.10 express was about to start for Strassburg. In the large waiting-room, three men of tall stature were walking about in the crowd of travellers. One of the trio, slightly shorter than the others, wore a soft hat and was enveloped in a large *Capuchon* cloak, with hood attached. He was speaking and gesticulating violently, and his two companions listened to him with attention and deference.

"Well," inquired the policeman of his brother, "do you recognise him?"

The journalist, who is from the South, suddenly became smitten with a wild idea. He saw a "story" to write, and what a story—an interview with the German Emperor secured by chance in the very centre of Paris, at the Eastern Station! He rushed towards the man in the *Capuchon* and said without hesitation:

"What do you think, Sire, of the Alsace-Lorraine question?"

But at the same instant, three or four men joined the waiting travellers and pushed to the side of the indiscreet reporter. They elbowed him and shoved him and pressed him back without a single word of excuse; and he saw with despair the mysterious personage in the *Capuchon* disappear in the express followed by his two companions.

However you take this anecdote, it is a pretty well established fact that, at the time of the Exposition, of 1900, William II. did come to Paris. His mind, naturally curious in regard to new things, and admiring all great shows, must have been greatly interested in the Paris fair, where now, for the first time, German industry played an important part.

Twice the Emperor visited Paris at the time of the

fair, and once he saw Napoleon's tomb in the Invalides, which must have produced upon him a keen impression, which, moreover, was neither the first nor the last of its kind.

The German Cæsar had everything to gain by visiting the shade of the French Cæsar, who had held trembling Prussia under his heel. In the silence of the crypt at the Invalides, William II. was able to revive Jena, and to fortify himself in his *rôle* as guardian of the Germanic Empire; and, in addition, he was at liberty to take a lesson in tactics and good sense.

He should really admire Napoleon, for his soul, full of traditions and warlike aims, gaping for all that breathes of glory and grandeur, is necessarily in sympathy with the immortal figure of the "Conquering Corsican."

It was thus that William II., with more anger than sincerity, one day designated Napoleon, in the disdain which he affected to have for him in a moment of ill humour.

We must return to the question of the Emperor's trips to Paris and the Imperial pranks of which they may have been the cause, and conclude by saying that as the German Kaiser is blessed with a capricious, curious, literary, and artistic character, it is much more natural to imagine that he has sojourned, from time to time in the capital of France, than it is logical to believe that he has never been there.

Moreover, he speaks of Paris as a man who knows it, and has very often rebuked more or less charitable story-tellers for whom the fine manners of our public men and their wives are so often the pretext for conversation in foreign courts.

PART III

The Mind of Man and Monarch

CHAPTER I

WILLIAM II. AND GOD

ONE is acquainted with the confession of faith of William II. and knows how he has the ingenious idea of turning religion into an arm and means of government. Providence is his friend and ally, and God one of his most eminent contemporaries whose affection and devotion towards him have been acquired in an altogether particular manner.

It pleases William II. to reveal the fact that he is inspired by the Lord, and no name appears more often in the speeches which he makes than that of the Almighty. "Faith in God," he has said, "and in God alone is the foundation of this empire. . . ."[1]

"I am your Emperor by an impenetrable decree of God."[2]

"Ye, oh Germans, are the elect people. The Lord hath said unto me: 'Go thou, choose men, and fight against the Amalekites.' . . ."[3]

"We must have one empire, one people, and one God."[4]

[1] Speech at Aix-la-Chapelle, June 19, 1902.

[2] Speech from the Throne, June 27, 1888.

[3] Sermon to the crew of the *Hohenzollern*, June 27, 1901.

[4] Speech to the First Regiment of the Guards, January 18, 1896.

This appeal to the Divinity occurs like a *leitmotiv* in the larger part of the Imperial harangues. Still it is impossible to discover whether the God of William II. is the God of Catholics or the God of Lutherans—ignoring, of course, that famous letter to Admiral Hollmann on Revelation which was merely a fortuitous declaration inspired by exceptional circumstances. His Majesty takes care to state precisely and not without a certain cleverness that he makes of "this ancient Deity of Germania," a national God—*Unser Gott*—of whom the Kaiser is the mouth-piece, and whose particular mission appears to be to intervene in the Imperial favour.

It is the God of Arminius, of Alaric, of Charlemagne, of Barbarossa, of Frederick the Great—the God which has been invoked in the whole round of patriotic songs from 1814 to 1870.

This almost special All-powerful one was he who filled the legions of Varus with terror, struck guilty Rome, inspired Great Charles and Great William I., and brought forth from the soil of Germany geniuses like Luther, Kant, Goethe, and Moltke; and it is this same Deity who, even to-day, suggests to Germans their mission of "world politics" with which their minds are filled.

It is an extravagant idea to attribute to the Divinity the formation of the German Empire, as a design essentially conceived by Him for all eternity. It is exquisitely ridiculous to imagine that, for thousands of years, events have been shaping themselves with this unique end in view, and that, even, at the dawn of the world man became invested with a divine command which was only to be achieved, after many intermissions, when the German people should be brought to realise that they were, in imitation of the Hebrews, "the chosen people of God."

In short, it remains to be explained how the Germans have become the successors of abandoned Israel. Did not the New Light first shine on the shores of the Orient, then in Greece, then in Rome, in the centre of that same civilisation where the Apostle Peter and Paul of Tarsus, appeared, entirely oblivious of the dense forests of Germania?

But William II. in his Deistic progression pauses before no obstacle.

In the eyes of the German Emperor Christianity and its two *succedanema*, Catholicism and Lutheranism, are the weak and degenerate forms of the true faith. It would be dangerous for Germans to trust themselves to such a theology, born in Romanism and Orientalism and little applicable to a strong regenerate race. With its gospel of love and forgiveness, reposing in patience and goodness and not on the strength of the sword, the religion of Jesus, so superior to that of the pagan, was able to transform the face of a degenerate, corrupt, and immoral world. But to-day, this Christian religion is asked, in its turn, to make way for a new and revised gospel borrowed from prehistoric Germano-Scandinavian times. What, according to the idea of his Majesty, has enfeebled the Latin and Slavonic races is their fidelity to a religion of goodness that was born from the meditations of Orientals. From it arises, he thinks, this humanitarianism, these cries for international arbitration, these ideal conceptions of universal peace so contrary to the development and triumph of brute force. The Emperor regards as his most mortal enemy "this new spirit" which is attracting people, and his most lively fear is that it may breathe its contaminating breath upon Germany.

But in the name of what principles does he order some hundred thousands of men to go and be killed?

Already he has had some difficulty in conciliating his duties as spiritual leader with those of temporal sovereign of Germany. It is not without a certain impunity that people pretend to unite upon the same head the tiara of a German pope and the crown of an emperor. In the meantime, William II. will continue to pose before his people as an ambassador of God. But when, in order to satisfy an immeasurable ambition, he shall draw the sword from its scabbard, the Kaiser will proclaim in the face of the universe that he is merely the humble instrument of the wishes of the Most-high. Moreover, he would inspire in the army an unshaken faith in the success of a cause which, before being that of the Emperor, is that of the Almighty!

The most simple method, it is true, is to persuade his subjects, as he has probably persuaded himself, that he is a sovereign composed of a superior essence and that as such he is only accountable to God himself. But what evangelical text or biblical commentary can he bring forth to confirm this claim? The Christian Gospel, besides forbidding the shedding of blood sets forth the equality of all men, from the highest to the lowest. An emperor is no more than any other man; and if the Gospel has said that it is necessary "to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," Christ did not let the generality stand without particularly defining "the things that are Cæsar's."

These and other motives, which one cannot enter upon without discussing the most weighty problems of philosophy, have restrained his Majesty from pronouncing upon the respective merits—equal in his eyes—of Catholicism and Lutheranism; but they have not prevented him from personally extolling, often in a most indiscreet fashion, the return of the Germans to the ancient beliefs of their ancestors. He strives un-

ceasingly to revive a sort of modernised Wotanism, freed from the "Dutch gold" of the fable.

The Emperor believes in a God—a God lost in the vastness of the inaccessible—who delegates all power and science to certain men with the understanding that they shall obey without questioning the messages which He sends them. In these circumstances, no account is rendered to any one; there is no obligation to justify one's acts since they are as impenetrable as the God from whom they emanated, and they have all eternity for their comprehension and justification!

But, it may be asked, why are certain men, rather than others, designated to direct their fellow creatures?

This objection does not embarrass William II. He leaves it to the will of that mysterious, unknown, X, who commands, according to him, the universe. If Wotan wishes to inflict a people with his anger, he creates for the purpose, on a neighbouring frontier, an extraordinary man—a Hannibal, an Alaric, an Attila, a Napoleon, a Moltke—and this man who at the time of his birth was a nonentity, feels gradually growing up within him the vigour of a god; he goes, runs, flies, to revenge hypothetical justice. Thus the world lives under a perpetual law of fear.

Is it not true that this is a most convenient system to justify the grandeur of monarchs and the subjection of peoples, as well as the fatal succession of peace by war? But this theological system through which the Emperor seeks to legitimise the exactions he imposes upon Germanic nations and which, in truth, is merely "the good pleasure of the prince" in ancient Roman law, solves absolutely nothing.

By what sign shall people recognise their monarch as *inspired?* Does the definition of *good* and *evil* depend upon these pretended inspirations, and does it not vary

with men, time, and circumstances? These are impenetrable problems which do not disturb William II. in the least degree. He has on this point an unconsciousness which is quite disarming. In fact this unnerved personality, so modern, so intelligent, and even so brilliant in certain aspects, is, from the point of view of common sense, an unbalanced mind, a mind gone astray (*un malade, un détraqué*).

When, on the deck of his yacht, the *Hohenzollern*, he sails over the *fjords* of Norway he dreams of those fabulous times when the gods of Scandinavian Valhalla were incarnate in mortal bodies and made the world tremble with the noise of their exploits. He waxes enthusiastic over the remembrance of those Northmen who, a thousand years ago, descended from the Northern seas to the mouths of the Schelde, the Seine, and the Loire and sang the ballads of the Valkyres and invocations to Thor, the god of thunder. He sees again these ocean pirates fearing naught but their gods, and in his imagination he joins in their adventures and search for booty in the sunny regions of the South, where dwelt Gaul and Iberian. And then his mind reverts to the Germans of to-day, and in thinking of that poor, industrious people, slumbering in deceitful peace, a powerful nation whose warlike instincts have been blunted in the name of civilisation and humanity, William II. becomes indignant and irritable. What a humiliating state of mind for a great soldier!

What shall bring back to him the heroism of the past, this spirit of sacrifice, this secret of victories won and to be won? Possibly its sacred and arid source may yet spout forth a new religion of which he will be the high priest.

To this idea we must attribute his frequent allusions, so often noted, to Scandinavian mythology. He does

not always say good things about Wagner, but *Lohengrin*, with its swan, its prodigies, its Graal, and its wherry have filled with enthusiasm the ardent soul of the Emperor.

Wagner's *Libretto*, in putting upon the stage a hero of German verse, whose adventures on land and sea, associate the dreams of the Northmen with the more common-place realities of the Brabançon, has, so to speak, depicted in advance this mystical, inconsistent, and fecund, floating dream, so dear to the Kaiser's mind. From afar, this dream causes fright by its seemingly impenetrable depth and its defiance of analysis, but on nearer approach, if one take the trouble to study it under Northern skies and in the light of its birth and development, it becomes singularly clear.

Imagine a grandson of Charlemagne born on the day after the appearance of the *Chanson de Roland*. This fresh and buoyant legend would naturally find an admirer in him, convinced that even the exaggerations of the poet were no more in his spirit than the exact expression of historical truth. William II. imagines himself to be such a grandson of the Great Charles and wishes to surround his crown with a legendary nimbus; he wishes to appear to live, so to speak, in a super-terrestrial atmosphere. He ought to be, he thinks, at least in the minds of his subjects, the "super-man" of which Nietzche speaks. Nothing else could legitimise his orders.

William II., who was born and grew up in an aureola of victories, as son and grandson of one of the " heroes of the great war," has thus posed as a being of superior essence charged with an epic mission, and has known how to deceive this German people whose materialism has been praised by certain writers, but who are, in reality, the most dreamy, the most credulous, the most sheep-like people in the whole world.

Enter into conversation with a German and you will find that his first words are: "O! our Emperor he is *somebody*, he knows everything." An honest people, those Germans—hero-worshippers by nature, they do not like to discuss the ideas of others, and believing, moreover, in the natural infallibility of their government (for has it not given them thirty active years of triumphs?), these people of the middle-class beyond the Rhine, have an almost blind confidence in their chiefs, their officials, and their army, and never think to ask themselves if their Emperor would not be of more real value, as a man, if he were satisfied to know everything about something instead of pretending to know something about everything.

But leave it to the Germans to persuade themselves of Imperial omnisciency, and let us return to this assumption of universal knowledge, denoted in William II. by the secret wish to make people believe in his genius and in a semi-deism incarnate in his person. For after all is not omnisciency an attribute of the Divinity?

Another proof: his journeys betray a mentality always in motion like the body in which it is shut up.

But God is also motion. Evidently the German Emperor, mortal man that he is, like the most humble of his subjects, does not partake with the Divinity of that attribute which he possibly most envies in Him—that of being everywhere at the same time. Still, his comings and goings are such as to make one almost believe that he has the gift of ubiquity. He rushes here and there, to Vienna, and back again to Potsdam, signs an army order, sends a resounding dispatch to the ends of the earth, dedicates a museum, is present at the launching of a ship, and, thanks to a Protean gift, he changes his clothes quicker than any actor in a panto-

mime—one after the other, general, admiral, sportsman, clubman, hunter, civilian,—astonishing the entire world and smashing all records.

Some people call him a madman, others a genius. Both are right, for insanity and genius meet upon the same frontier.

The fact must be emphasised that it is in the course of his voyages in Northern seas that he has acquired his most extravagant ideas. Every time he returns from the North his imagination is fairly brimming with the fables of Wotanism. One would say that he had met Frithjof riding on Ellida to meet the *Hohenzollern*.

Arriving from Bergen, June 27, 1892, he presided at the launching of a little battle-ship of the German navy. In christening the vessel he said:

"O ship, I baptise thee *Heimdall*. Thou receivest thy name from the prehistoric times of our ancestors in the North. Thou bearest the name of a god to whom it was given to defend the golden gates of Valhalla. And in the same way that this hero, in the time of danger, sounded upon his golden horn in the Twilight of the gods, I trust, O ship, thou wilt bear the great name of *Heimdall* that the noise of thy march may sow trouble and discord in the ranks of thy enemies."

The *Heimdall* is not the only German warship which bears a name drawn from Scandinavian mythology. There are also the *Ilbebrand*, *Ægir*, *Frithjof*, *Odin*, *Beowulf*, *Velleda*, etc. It is unnecessary to add that the Kaiser himself chooses the names for the vessels of his fleet. But for several years he has reserved for his battle-ships the names of the German emperors of his dynasty and of the royal families of the Federated States. After the German gods, quite naturally and logically, come all those personages hypothetically inspired by these imaginary divinities.

The Kaiser's passion for the sea has contributed not a little towards exalting his nature, already so profoundly mystical. One day, in a speech delivered at Bremen on board the *Fulda*, one of the steamers of the North German Lloyd, he confessed that on the water the German flag flying from the main masts of ships, had the effect of "being held by the hand of an archangel!" He desired, moreover, that images of divinities and heroes, after whom ships had been named, should be placed as figure heads on their bows as a sign of mysterious protection. When the ship starts and forges along, propelled by her powerful engine, sailors and spectators on the dock enjoy, he believes, the illusion of a divinity conducting the vessel towards the noble destinies which heaven has reserved for her.

These are the methods and these the revived superstitions of another age which William II., does not hesitate to employ in these days of progress and enterprise, in order to impress upon his people the idea of a cloudy idealism which he is not ashamed to mingle with a strange fanaticism.

Does he succeed in it? Among the Pan-Germans, yes. Among those Germans of Germany who are not Pan-Germans, and they number more than the others, these mystico-theologico-religico-psycho-extravagancies are not taken seriously. Nevertheless, it is quite a remarkable fact that the principal society for the propagation of the Pan-Germanic idea, is called the *Odinverein* (the Odin Club), and that the centre of its organisation is in Bavaria, at Munich. It recruits its disciples, or more justly its novices in an original manner by distributing along the public highways illustrated postcards and special pious leaflets, one of which, *The Odin*, printed in editions of fifty thousand copies, is

supported by a contribution, the source of which continues to remain a mystery. Sometimes the Kaiser is represented on these leaflets in the guise of the god Thor, in the middle of a fiery cloud brandishing a thunderbolt against the enemies of the Empire. The poverty of execution in these pictures is scarcely saved by the originality of the idea. Pan-Germanism has thus, for two thousand years, it would seem, depicted Jupiter making the Titans tremble, and it is not otherwise than the Christians have imagined the Archangel confounding the dragon. Thus we have it proved, whatever the Emperor and Wotanists may think of it, that there is no religion which is absolutely original. All have come from a common fount, and impress themselves upon the world by similar characteristic signs and principles. In any event however, Wotanism will never save the world.

Even this "law of fear" under which William II. tries to bend Europe, is itself merely a reminiscence of former times. It has had its day; it has been revived, as the King of Prussia has revived it, until blunted and softened by the approach of Christianity it could have merely ephemeral success. Fear alone and without love is not a generator of progress; it has in its wake, a too-lamentable train—hypocrisy, cruelty, base flattery —to bring about the necessary reaction. And more than all, it can only support itself through the idea of an incontestable authority which, in this world, is sought after in vain.

No! time no longer is, when human authority may claim divine origin, or emperors, without being ridiculous, designate themselves the proxies of the divinity, the anointed of the Lord, and the chief of the German Federation through adopting this superannuated theory by pretending to rejuvenate it and make it over to live

anew in the face of rationalism and socialism. No! such a proceeding gives one more proof of his Majesty's lack of reason and of a just idea of the times in which he lives.

CHAPTER II

WILLIAM II. AND TRADITION

WHAT William II. understands by tradition may be simply summarised as follows:

In his eyes German tradition is confined to the history of Prussia having its beginning with the establishment of the Empire. To his thinking, the centuries before the Federated peoples of to-day became united under the same sceptre constituted a stagnant epoch of which it is unnecessary to speak. "When there was no emperor," he has said, "times were ghastly and life bitter." Or again: "Why was it given us to await the results which we have obtained? First of all it was that we are dominated by tradition and we consider ourselves as placed by God to rule the peoples over whom He has called us to reign and morally lead them through life." Or better yet, he declares himself "to be the guardian of the traditions of all the Federal Armies—Hanoverian, Hessian, Saxon, and Bavarian."[1]

In speaking of William I., on the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, March 22, 1897, he cried: "I am convinced that the soul of the great Emperor hovers over his people to-day and that it is, at this very time, visiting his flags to see whether the air of Germany still agitates their folds."

In a word, tradition is the spirit of "old Prussia"—

[1] Speech to the officers of the Tenth Corps, January 24, 1899.

order, discipline, blind obedience. "One should not," he went on to say, "dispute the word of an Emperor! . . . It will be the *rôle* of German Emperors in the century which is now at hand, to preserve religion, *in spite of the new spirit and new ideas*, as a model for all the nations of the earth." On another day he publicly rejoiced that the new quarter of Dantzig was being constructed in a style identical with that of the old buildings of the town.

It has been noticed that, since 1898, the word "Germania" has usually taken the place of "Germany" in the Imperial harangues. One of the most suggestive speeches, from that point of view, was delivered in Mayence in reply to the burgermaster of that city, August 28, 1898. The Kaiser declared that he wished to keep intact the heritage which had been confided to him by his grandfather. "To this end," he said, "the unity and co-operation of all the Germanic tribes are necessary for me."

"Germanic tribes!" Is not the expression curious?

In August, 1900, when the flags destined for the regiments in China were blessed at the Berlin arsenal, William II. carried for the first time a marshal's baton —a stick about a metre in length covered with yellow silk around which was entwined a red ribbon bearing the eagles embroidered in black. No one can have failed to notice the prevalence in Germany of these three colours, yellow, red, and black, and not without reason. They are not the colours of the Present German Empire, but are those of the ancient Confederation of Germania.

There is no doubt that the Kaiser presumes to have inherited his conception of politics from the kings and emperors of all the Germanic races. On November 29, 1900, at the time of the inauguration of a monument to

the memory of Charles IV., who was king of Bohemia from 1346 to 1378, he delivered a speech, of which the following is a characteristic passage:

"This Emperor who built a splendid *château* at Tangermünde, was marvellously endowed to understand the questions which concern us to-day. Possibly right here where we stand, he very often thought over the plan which he had conceived for the creation of an Empire of the North of which the base should be the Elbe."

This anxiety to maintain "traditions" in the new German Empire comprises: I. A great respect for those who have helped to bring the scattered portions of the Empire together, particularly expressed through admiration for William I., "the unforgettable grandfather"; II. The maintenance of the military spirit in the army, of the full confidence of the people and its absolute abandonment to the will of those who govern it; III. A return to a more severe education shaped on national lines.

The perpetual idea of his Majesty is to make of his grandfather an almost superhuman personage, who, during the thirty-six years of his reign, had transformed the face of the world by obliging it to model itself upon the restored culture of Germany; to recall his name on every possible occasion and to attach to it the most laudatory and unexpected epithets. We hear that William I. was "the father of his country" (*Vater des vaterlands*), "the unforgettable sovereign" (*der unvergessliche Herr*), "the deceased saint" (*der hochselie*), "the most honoured" (*der hochvehrte*), "the genius of Germany" (*der geist Deutschlands*), the "hero," the "victorious," the "grand."

As one may readily see, never has sovereign been more exalted than the first emperor of the new empire.

But this *débauche* of monuments reared in honour of a monarch who, in reality, had the sole merit of knowing well how to choose his ministers and to allow himself to be guided by them, is it not contrary to the end aimed at by William II.? History, at least universal history, will not confirm, in every instance, this admiration which the grandson shows for his ancestor; and the presumption of William II. to make of the first William a sort of Nestor, a "grandfather of the hundred snows" of all the Germanic "tribes," does not seem to have been crowned with great success. We live no longer in the days of "Charles of the hoary beard," and in our age of knowledge, of telegraph, of rapid transit information is too easily acquired to accept without protest a mystical, nebulous, poetical halo of holiness as the natural appendage of an old man, who died in 1888.

In his repeated efforts to surround the Imperial dynasty with profound respect, William II. has gone too far. He has badly chosen the saint that he would canonise, and a detailed panegyric of his hero would be very embarrassing for him. It would be difficult work, aside from the victories won, thanks to overwhelming forces and an unscrupulous diplomacy and the foolishness or weakness of his adversaries, for the Kaiser to celebrate before his people the exceptional benefits of the grandsire.

Is it not a remarkable example of self-deception, on his part, to preach to Germans of to-day for a peremptory return to the spirit of 1860? Germans of forty years ago—old men to-day—are in a position to state whether their generation was the golden age; that generation was an age of iron, and in proportion as the debilitating smoke of victories shall continue to disperse, the Germans of to-day and to-morrow will better

perceive what there is false, conventional, and empty in this word *Traditionen* so dear to William II.

Tradition, according to his Majesty, ought, more than anything else, to dominate the army. And nothing could be better, if William II. understood by the term, courage, devotion, and the spirit of sacrifice. But nothing could be worse, if he presumes, as it is believed he does, that it means the perpetuation of Prussian military methods, dress parades, and clock-like drill, whose works, according to Scharnhorst, would be smashed by the first shell or discharge of schrapnel.

Lieutenant Bilse in his *Auf Einer Kleiner Garnison*, and Herr Beyerlein in *Jena oder Sedan* have pointed out the growing danger of this fascination for dress parade which has nothing in common with teaching the true duties of the soldier. And these Imperial charges, these cavalcades galloping in the full light of day against a supposed enemy! They are to be laughed at and nothing else! Fortunate it will be for the French, if in a war with Germany, they shall be obliged to contend against methods and traditions of this sort.

But what is the opinion of William II. on the military education of a soldier? Does he believe in preserving those brutal methods and cruel treatment to the detriment of the young recruits of the German barracks? Does he consider this system an inviolable heritage of the past? And does it also form part of the sacro-holy tradition? In a word, is he in favour of an education conducted by boot kicks and sword blows or of another conducted more rationally and humanely? The Kaiser, ordinarily so loquacious, has not yet spoken on this point. Still, it may be taken for granted that when he sees the spirit of revolt silently making its way through the ranks of his soldiers, he will lose no time in indicating his preferences.

It is especially the great mass of the German people which William II. would impregnate with this military spirit based on the soldier's blind confidence in and absolute surrender to his chief, his sovereign. That is why he ceaselessly lauds the times of Frederick the Great, when the Prussian nation, closed in around its king, and presented a victorious front to four invasions. But it might be asked if this incessant appeal to duty and traditional submission may not end by becoming a mere bye-word without any impression on the mind of the crowd, and whether popular confidence in Imperial infallibility can survive newspaper criticism and the oratorical contradictions of William II. It is not by multiplying the condemnations for *lèse-majesté* and transgressions against civil rights that the Emperor will be able to silence the malcontents. Here the method of force is ineffective. And as a chief of State, whenever he drops his *rôle* of arbiter, becomes prone to error just like anyone else, one may predict that the day is not far distant when the subjects of William II. will regard his words as those of a partisan.

His Majesty is naturally interested in the education of the youth of Germany, for this education applies to the eight or nine million pupils of the colleges and universities who, in ten or twelve years, will be conscripts or have acquired the right to vote. His Majesty does not hesitate to charge that the modern methods of instruction are the cause of this careless *laisser-aller* spirit, this absence of principle and moral conduct which he notices in the German youth. One has seen with what care he chooses his professors; he requires pious and practical Christians. It is even related that the Empress and her husband worked for several days editing a religious manual for the instruction of youth.

When he visits the *collegiums* and the *gymnasiums*

the Kaiser never fails to remind the pupils that they must remain faithful to the belief of their ancestors. It is a genuine monomania with him to discourse to students on passages from the history of the Jews. Rarely does he touch upon the New Testament; he knows that between it and the questions of his Empire there is no sympathy. What does he say to young people? Nothing original. Absolute obedience to father and mother, submission to the orders of the King are the usual themes of the Imperial homilies.

It is, therefore, in accordance with these ideas that since the first days of his reign, his Majesty has thought of reforming university education. On December 4, 1890, he called together an academic conference in the great hall of the Ministry of Public Instruction. The Emperor took the floor and dilated upon a few of his personal ideas anent education. The speech makes curious reading for the reason that probably no other delivered by him betrays a greater effort of having reflected on a subject in order to demonstrate what he thinks about it:

"One of our special cares," he said, "should be the education of youth. The shortcomings of this education, as now conducted, are numerous. Since 1870, philologues have been installed in the *gymnasiums* like *beati possidentes* and have employed all their talents in the scientific training of their pupils without thinking of forming their character or of paying any attention to the particular needs of the life of the present day. The 'athletic' spirit of the mind must first be touched. There is more strength in *being able* to do a thing than in *knowing* how to do it.

"Gentlemen: One who has examined our system in a thorough yet discreet manner—that is to say from behind the scenes—knows perfectly well that it lacks a

national foundation. The German language should be cultivated in the *gymnasium*. We are teaching young Germans and not Greeks and Romans. We must get out of the rut in which we have been for a century and break away from this ancient culture of the cloisters and monasteries of the Middle Ages when Latin and Greek held sway. Concerning Latin, I will even go so far as to say that it wears upon the mind of us Germans and causes us to waste much valuable time in an age which we should better consecrate to a study of our own national language.

"Historical, geographical, and traditional questions should be the subjects especially inviting study from the national point of view. In my time, for example, the Great Elector was looked upon as a sort of vague, dissolving figure. The Seven Years' War was completely neglected and history ended at the end of the century with the French Revolution. The struggles for liberty, which, however, interest the youth of to-day, were voluntarily relegated to the fogs; and if I happen to have a knowledge of them, it is alone due to my dear tutor, Special Counsellor Hinzpeter, who took pains to turn my attention to them. This is one of the essential points. Why are young people seduced by so many political innovations? Why do we meet so many so-called universal reformers with such obscure and confused ideas? Why do ceaseless debates vociferously din in our country and abroad?

"Gentlemen: I have discovered the cause. It is because our young men do not know enough concerning how our history was made and how our present condition has its roots in the French Revolution. I have arrived at this conviction from the fact that if we had lucidly explained to our youth the events of the French Revolution, they would have an entirely different con-

ception of the questions of the present. In 1789 this vague, uncertain, yearning of people, this foolish hope of a world better than kings knew how to give them reached its climax.

"What further I have to reproach our schools and *gymnasiums* with is an excessive curriculum. Liberal careers are thus hindered rather than helped. To borrow a phrase from Prince Bismarck, we are afflicted with a new labouring class, the labouring class of candidates, of thirsty candidates, among whom I would mention *Meine Herren die Journalisten* who have come ill-prepared from college. That is the danger which threatens us! It is like an irrigated field so cut-up with ditches that there is nothing left to cultivate. Gentlemen, it is absolutely necessary to divert this excess toward other fields. Otherwise we shall be submerged.

"Hygiene, the care of the body, cleanliness, ventilation are subjects too often forgotten among us. I remember that when I was at the *gymnasium* of Cassel, I had the best room in the establishment—good light, good ventilation. Nevertheless, when my dear mother visited my chamber, she found it too bare and scantily furnished, and complained that they had not given me one more comfortable. Gentlemen, the worst disease which afflicts our young men is myopia—nearsightedness. Out of thirty students in my class twenty-one were obliged to wear glasses, and three of the latter could not see as far as their table without them.

"Yes, gentlemen: There are reforms to be accomplished in our system of instruction. The world moves on and we must feel the pulse of our age and of this new spirit which is coming forth from all nations. It is high time to direct our young history toward unexplored paths. If we remain inactive, we shall be conquered within twenty years.

"Allow me to recapitulate. I would recall to your minds that celebrated formula of the ancients: *Cuique suum*—to each his own and not to all the same thing. You, professors, historians, writers, I leave to you the youth of Germany, in saying: 'Until now we have been leading our young men from Thermopylæ to Cannes toward Rosbach and Vionville. For the future, we must set out from Sedan and Gravelotte toward Leuthen and Rosbach in order to reach Mantinea and Thermopylæ.' That is, I believe, the road we should mark out for our youth."

This speech in which William II. makes an obvious effort to appear practical and reasonable is most false in spirit. Aside from certain commonplace truths, it is essentially lacking in logic and good sense. In short, William II. advertised to the teachers of German youth a Germanised system of instruction. As he understands it, all the ills from which German people are now suffering — Socialistic aspirations, the desire for luxury, the yearning for political office, and for liberal careers—are the result of Græco-Latin instruction and an erroneous comprehension of the consequences of the French Revolution, the principle of which German youths are slow to grasp. The Emperor would have placed a staying hand upon the French Republicans of '89, so incapable of bettering the condition of the people; and he supposes that when once a youth has reached this conviction, he will again have confidence in his Emperor as the only man capable of solving the social problem.

Incidentally, one may look in vain for the crimes for which classical education may be judged guilty. Even admitting that the poetical and idealistic influence of southern literature may be responsible for a certain levity, one does not take into full account what the

youth beyond the Rhine would realise in intellectual profit were it confined purely and simply to the German language. Modern German is saturated with Græco-Latin terms. How otherwise could scientific terminology be understood where all is a matter of Greek and Latin roots? But here is something still more significant: This same William II. so ferocious a partisan of the Germanic language to the exclusion of all other, scatters his own diction with neologisms of French extraction.

In the speech, the principal passages of which we have just read, one can pick out in the neighbourhood of fifty-five expressions or derivations which are purely Gallic. Here are a few: *Revolution*, *konfus*, *national*, *gymnastik*, *kulissen*, *geographie*, *journalisten*, *examina*, *pensum*, *konferenz*.

But his Majesty is not the only contradiction. Classic German itself is composed to the extent of two-thirds, of Græco-Latin prefixes. If it should be purified by eliminating all the terms which are not national, it would present, in a word, a Teutonic autochthon language which no one in Berlin would be able to understand, the Kaiser first of all.

What is the good of discussing the opinion of his Majesty on the French Revolution and its consequences? It is that of a blindman who discourses about painting.

But what shall we say of this conception of a method of historical study which begins with contemporaneous events and then descends to ancient times? First to tell children the story of Gravelotte, and then take them by easy stages down the centuries to Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans in the pass of Thermopylæ is an absurd idea which has not even the merit of being new. It is a classic joke. In all universities

there are usually one or two monomaniacs to extol and defend it. But so far as it concerns Germany, or for that matter any other country, nothing is more stupid and impracticable.

Have they the presumption to imagine they may, by chance, find a Teutonic origin in the great feats of valour of all humanity? Was it possible that the Lacedemonian, who returned to announce to his countrymen of Sparta the heroic death of those 299 companions in the immortal pass, may have left a Germanic descendant?

Let us go no further. German historians who lay claim at the same time, to Charlemagne and to Witikind, his enemy, are not scrupulous. For them, all means are good when they seek to give their Empire, which unlike our France, is not fourteen centuries old, the unity, history, and traditions which it lacks. We know what they have found.

And above and beyond all William II. recommends respect and remembrance for these hypothetical "traditions." Understand them ye who can.

CHAPTER III

WILLIAM II. AND NATIONAL UNITY

"WE must have one Empire, one people, one God," said William II., in a speech addressed to the first Grenadier Regiment of the Guards, January 18, 1896. This sentiment signifies that if the German Empire is founded the German people are not. They lack unity. There is a constitutional difference between the Germanic Confederation which conquered in 1870 and the German Empire of to-day. The King of Prussia has added to his title the attribute of "German Emperor," but a German still prefers to be called, as the case may be, Bavarian, Saxon, Würtemberger, Hessian, Hanoverian; but a Prussian, never! unless of Prussian birth.

Nevertheless, the victories won from France, the blood shed in common on the battlefields cemented the alliance conceived by the genius of Bismarck on the eve of the French disasters. Since then, the victorious peoples, vain and enthusiastic for the commercial development of the country, have quite naturally regarded the new state of things with a favourable eye. Newspapers subventioned by secret funds from Berlin, have done their part towards making the union attractive in spite of its artificiality; and the Federal Princes, however desirous of autonomy they may be have understood

that, in submitting to the Prussian scheme, they are thus guaranteed against a possible French *revanche*, and are, at the same time, consolidating their own dynasties with the assurance of having the support of Prussian bayonets in the event of internal troubles.

In coming into power, William II. conceived the idea of a general *rapprochement*, and a general welding together of the still incongruous elements of the Empire. The idea was simple; its execution more difficult. The Kaiser had the choice of two methods: to appeal to the kings, princes, dukes, and grand dukes, or to their people.

By living on good terms with the heads of the Federated States, by associating them with the affairs of the Empire and by consulting them, either in person or through their representatives in the Federal Council, William II. flattered their instincts for power, interested them in maintaining the new *régime* and so caused them to pardon the supremacy accorded the Hohenzollerns.

This supremacy, William II. as head and arbiter for all, set about to confirm and develop through special conventions which regulated the affairs of Prussia in its relations to the other states. It was stipulated, for example, that the members who composed the Federal Council should be appointed to the extent of two-thirds by the King of Prussia, while the remaining third, plus one or two members, should be chosen by the other sovereigns. Quite naturally, Prussia took the lion's share, since the present number of its inhabitants (32,000,000) represents a little more than half of the entire population of the Empire (58,000,000) and thirty-three years ago the proportion was about the same.

The other states console themselves in thinking that great questions concerning the allied German peoples

(commercial treaties, tariffs, and declarations of war) can only be decided by the full and complete majority of two-thirds of the councillors which Prussia and her King could not boast of obtaining alone. How is it that the Federated States, which in 1870 gave such formidable support to Prussia, are satisfied with so little?

Here we have one of the most significant results of the Bismarckian genius. Intoxicated by the amazing success which they obtained over their old enemy, France, and having satiated their hatred against that other enemy who for two centuries had been master of the Palatinate and Bavaria and whose victorious flags had so long been reflected in the waters of the Danube and the Rhine, all the allies of Prussia wished to show to that kingdom their gratitude for a revenge so complete and unhoped for.

But, in spite of all, Bavaria showed some resistance, and it is only necessary to read Herr Ottokar Lorenz's *The Foundation of the German Empire* to see what a narrow escape the German eagle had from dying in the egg. Twice were the negotiations between the two states in danger of being broken, and we know that if the King of Bavaria took the initiative in proposing to confer the title of *Deutsche Kaiser* upon King William and his descendants, it was only after much hesitation and not without some regret.

The Bavarian Landtag approved, with the necessary majority, the convention which bound Bavaria to the German Empire only after a month of heated discussion. But Herr von Bismarck had had the cleverness to make the preliminary agreements in such a fashion as to isolate Bavaria; and the other states, so small by the side of Prussia, did not have sufficient strength of character to dispute the number of Hohenzollern votes represented in the Federal Council. It happened,

therefore, that when she entered the Empire, Bavaria found herself confronted by a situation which she was unable to modify. Since the conclusion of the treaty of 1871, the Bavarian vote in the Federal Council, has remained small and ridiculous.

It is true that Bavaria and the other governments derided by Prussia have played the *rôle* of dupes, but they possessed the necessary disposition to be duped. The smoke of glory hid from them the realities of politics.

This smoke disappeared in time, but its place was taken by a subtle, and pushing policy which, by every possible means, sought to make the Federal States forget that little surprise of January, 1871. With this policy, however, William II. can hardly be said to have succeeded. Instead of permitting them to enjoy certain bits of influence, which would by no means have diminished the supremacy of Prussia, he has tried to flatter by paying frequent and usually interested visits to the heads of the Federated States; he has given them advice which they did not need, and has intervened in their affairs when such intervention was an impertinence—the dispatch from Swinemunde, for example. At other times, he has refused them honors which appeared to belong to them. Indeed, William II. has shown slight desire to make concessions to the Federal Princes of his Empire, and what he has done for them has not amounted to much. He affects, as we know, to address them *thou* and *thee* with that air of familiarity now fashionable among European sovereigns, but this form, whatever its uses, he does not employ toward all. Only the Kings (of Saxony, Würtemberg, and Bavaria) are so honored. The grand dukes, the princes, and the dukes are not considered worthy to be on familiar terms with either an emperor or a king:

they are almost on a par with burgermasters and are addressed *you*.

In following this distinction, William II. imagines that he flatters the simple vanity of the sovereigns of the more important Federal States. But what do the others think? Are the Grand Dukes of Hesse and Baden, the Prince of Saxe-Coburg-and-Gotha, the Duke of Weimar, the Princes and Dukes of Mecklenberg, etc., satisfied? We are not informed. At the same time, we know from unofficial reports, the gossip of the Courts, and from the pointed remarks of the papers, that the Emperor is more or less the subject of derision on the part of his Princely and Royal colleagues. Among themselves they criticise his travelling mania, and his solemn manner of receiving ambassadors; they even go so far as to give to his words a ludicrous sense which they really do not possess.

The proof that the Kaiser has not succeeded in winning the respect and good-will of the princes and kings is that his relations have become more or less strained with several of them.

The Prince Regent of Bavaria gives him the cold shoulder whenever the opportunity offers, and the Grand Dukes of Baden and Hesse, without mentioning others, return his domineering snubs with interest.

It is easy to imagine how the frequently intemperate language of William II. has driven from him the sympathy of his allies and their families. He does not know how to restrain himself when anger dominates him; whatever may be at stake he is quite oblivious of possible results. And there are always plenty of charitably-disposed persons ready to report the words of his Majesty in quarters where they will do most harm. Of course, some of the damage done is not always and entirely irreparable and the old *North German Gazette*

spends half its time in making denials; nevertheless, "something remains." Least of all are the Federal Princes duped by articles in the official organ.

But it must not be supposed that when the Emperor expresses himself too freely it is always without malice aforethought. He always has malice aforethought! What he wants to do is to show to all people of Germanic origin that the King of Prussia alone has no "past history," at least no serious "past history," that he can criticise the princely German families and their too frequent examples of weakness and demonstrate, by an analysis of the morals of others, that he is the only German Monarch capable of leading Germans in the paths of virtue. The lessons he gives he thinks are good for everybody and strengthen the throne of Prussia. In this, as in everything else, William II. is most careful to have himself in capital letters on the billboards of Power.

Sovereigns, just as common mortals, have rivalries among themselves. Do not the stars of heaven vary in beauty and grandeur? Sirius blushes on being compared to the new star Perseus. Germany, therefore, should admire Sirius, and regard with contempt the secondary planets.

The trouble with William II. is that he has simultaneously attempted to win the faith of kings and their peoples by diametrically opposite methods. He, so absolute and autocratic in Prussia advertises the attractions of democracy beyond the frontier of his own kingdom. His method is very simple: he has at his service a subventioned press the funds of which are not always above suspicion. Among what are called "the Potsdam newspapers" is the *Kölnische Zeitung* (the *Cologne Gazette*) which is irreverently but not without justice called "the weather cock of Cologne," for it changes

its opinions as often as the wind and in accordance with the varied mind of the Kaiser; then there is the *Strasburger Zeitung*, the Empire's organ in Alsace-Lorraine. This was the only paper which discussed and finally reduced to zero the recent success of the Socialists. Another "Potsdam paper" is the *Suddeustche Correspondenz*, a sort of Foreign Office juvenile, expressly carried on for the purpose of explaining to the Germans of the South the profound international policies which agitate the Berlin chancellery. The *Suddeustche* only publishes *communiqués* on great occasions, especially when a blunder has been committed in Berlin. Its special function is to turn an obvious defeat into a diplomatic victory. South Germany is not over-interested in foreign affairs; there they readily accept the explanations offered.

We know that South Germany sends more Clerical than other members to the Reichstag. Of the forty-eight representatives from Bavaria, thirty are now sitting with the Centre. For, in the opinion of Catholic deputies of all countries, questions which do not directly interest the Church are considered secondary. Whether great nobles or gentlemen, they are always conservative and their horizon is always limited. It is fortunate for the German Empire that the majority of deputies from the states of the South is Clerical, for it never disputes the supremacy of the Hohenzollerns any more than it puts obstacles in the way of the absorption of Germany by Prussia.

In spite of the zeal with which the Clerical deputies of the South favour the development of Imperial influence, cases of discontent are numerous among their constituents. Just as in France, the inhabitants of the country districts of Germany are slow to formulate their claims and complaints; but the time is near when

they will know how to make themselves heard. The German taxpayer, especially the peasant, makes a face, but murmurs little, when called upon to defray the local expenses of his little country, in exactly the same way that he participates in aiding the Imperial Budget. But for two years past, the first symptoms of a disquieting weariness, have been apparent. Expenses have been growing on account of the increase in the army, naval, and educational budgets; agriculture has been more and more restricted; there have been industrial crises; the Socialist propaganda has made its way in the country districts, and finally the complaints of the Agrarian League have succeeded in disturbing the tranquil district where dwelt the Pan-German committees of the South.

In passing, it is proper to take note of a social phenomenon which has not been without influence on the progress, more or less marked, of German unification: there is going on in the interior of Germany a constant emigration and immigration among the states themselves. Southern Germans, in considerable numbers, have moved to the large cities of Prussia, especially to Berlin, while many Prussian merchants and small capitalists, in search of prosperity or tranquillity, have moved to the little towns of the South. Each group has taken with it its ideas and tendencies and these are fiercely agitated. Thus in the South we constantly hear of ardent partisans of the Empire vociferating its advantages and calling upon heaven to aid in the great work—in such a manner as to bring forth smiles on the faces of their new neighbours.

On the other hand, the transplanted Southern German is ready to debate the advantages and disadvantages of the new *régime*. Less chauvinist than the Prussians, the Southerners do not consider that the existence of

the most formidable army in Europe and a strong navy are arguments admitting of no reply. With their frugal, practical mind they look at the bills to pay. Nevertheless, they pay with good grace, because being ardent Catholics they are deeply grateful to the Emperor for the liberal spirit with which he studies to slacken, little by little, the chains of the *Kulturkampf*.[1] At the same time, they are not entirely oblivious of the fact that in exchange for certain vague concessions, the Emperor continues to burden them with taxes and to postpone reforms that are most desirable.

But however well disposed toward them the Imperial policy may be, it takes care not to exhaust its favours by an over-indulgence from the religious point of view. It amuses them, gives them offices, honours, and shows marks of good will here and there, and even listens to their complaints. Still, when these complaints become too loud the powers that be give them to understand that they must not disturb the Protestants of the Empire, and that all precipitation in such matters would only end in disaster.

It is worth while noting that, on this special point, the policy of the Emperor has been administered with a certain cleverness. But can he keep it up?

The future attitude of the Landtags of Bavaria, Baden, Würtemberg, Saxony, and Hesse is the black spot on the horizon. Is it not possible that the Socialist successes in the Reichstag may have reverberations in the future composition of the local parliaments? Everywhere universal suffrage prevails, Social Democrats are eagerly striving to monopolise legislation. Where universal suffrage does not obtain they seek to

[1] For example, at the time this book is being written, the Kaiser is seeking to have the Prussian Parliament repeal the law against the Jesuits.

bring it about, and where their candidates have no chance of success they, nevertheless, carry on an agitated campaign of education which shall finally be favourable to the diffusion of their ideas. Whenever in a local parliament, ten or twenty Socialists pass to the distribution riddle of the expenses written in the Imperial budget, they criticise the acts or the words of the civil or military representatives of the Emperor, the interference of troops in strikes, the increase of the army contingent supplied by the various states; in short, they profit by every occasion presented in their modest sphere to protest against the established order of things; and they demand to know what will happen at the end of several years of such a *régime* of Imperial unity maintained with so much difficulty by the artifices of the Kaiser and the complaisance of the Clericals? Remember, by the way, that the local press prints full accounts of these exciting sessions so punctuated with protests, objurgations, and threats, that public opinion may be aroused, and princes and kings so fear for their crowns that they will be obliged to grant the concessions demanded. What, then, it is asked, will become of this national unity made of different institutions of dissimilar opinions? Such are the contests, the echoes of which are heard in the Reichstag! Shall we not, they ask, take part in a definite parcelling out of these elements so badly welded together in the young empire? People talk about a federal republic, but they only hanker after an oppressive union for the benefit of the Prussian Crown. That is fatal.

In short, if the Emperor has displayed before the federated peoples an ingenious policy and has studied to flatter and satisfy the Clerical deputies, who form seven-tenths of the Southern legislators, he has failed to obtain, as he wished, the sincere support, esteem,

and frank co-operation of their princes, kings, and grand dukes.

He might be able to console himself, if the attitude which he has maintained toward the Catholics for the last fifteen years would always produce the brilliant results hitherto achieved by it. Unfortunately for the Kaiser and his successors, the future does not seem promising. Once the *Kulturkampf* is forgotten, the Clericals will be immediately pledged and will not delay to ask for reforms or lay claim to concessions more sweeping than a few vague moral tributes. At the same time one will see at the extremes of the Opposition the menacing shadow of Socialism, already a complete master of Saxony, dominating Munich, Stuttgart, and Carlsruhe, and threatening to capture Strasburg and Mülhausen.

Little by little the Federated States, which have not universal suffrage in their local elections, will be obliged to accept it; the popular breath of the Democratic party will blow up a hurricane from the banks of the Seine that will reach old Germania. The time has come when the voice of kings and emperors are being lost amid the tumult of parliamentary debates; and the moment is not distant when William II., having cajoled the representatives of the German people of the South to the detriment of the kings of the Federated States, will perceive that, not having the proper mental equipment, he was wrong to play the *rôle* of Machiavelli.

CHAPTER IV

WILLIAM II. AND GERMANY'S FUTURE

"GERMANY'S future is upon the waters." This Imperial saying, written in Gothic characters one might have read on the wall of the North German Lloyd pavilion at the Paris Exposition of 1900. The legend is the quintessence of his Majesty's aspirations.

Haunted by the spectacle of the British Empire and its four hundred million subjects and disturbed by the projects of gigantic Russia whose population is rapidly approaching one hundred and fifty million and whose redoubtable ambition unceasingly yearns to govern at the same time Constantinople and Peking, William II. has long hesitated before this alternative: whether to agitate for naval and commercial expansion, or concentrate his forces in Germany itself in such a way as to present a solid Teutonic barrier toward the menacing Empire of the Czars. He has not yet made his choice, but for the moment he is striving simultaneously to realise German expansion in Europe, and to develop the interests of the Empire in all the quarters of the earth. The path he follows resembles that of Louis, XIV. and Louis XV.

Two hundred years ago Frenchmen migrated to Canada, spread over the Far West of America and established trading posts or settlements in the West Indies and on the Western coast of Africa. In Europe France was then preponderant by her population which,

compared with that of the neighbouring states, resembles that of Germany to-day in respect to other European nations. By a series of victories and audacious conquests France consolidated her unity and marked out her frontiers. But Royalty, carried away by an excessive ambition sought to wipe out these natural boundaries and by one stroke add Spain to France. In this scheme, which aroused the opposition of all Europe, Louis XIV. came to grief; and when, in 1715, he who is still called the *Grand Roi* died, France was left ruined and the object of European hate. Louis XV. pursued the same way and accentuated its errors. After a series of Continental struggles, which added nothing to the glory of France, he had the folly to make war simultaneously on England by sea and against the King of Prussia on land. In 1762, France, beaten at Rosbach and under the walls of Quebec, lost her supremacy in Europe and the sovereignty of the world.

Let us admit for the moment, that had Louis XIV. and Louis XV. limited their ambitions and been content with a policy of aggression against the German nations or Great Britain but without plunging into distant naval enterprises, what a different figure France would cut to-day on the map of the world.

William II. believes that the lessons of the past have no meaning for him. Germany will also have her "question of Spanish succession," in Austria, at the same time that she puts on her armour to wrest the supremacy of the seas from Albion. Unfortunately, after England, there will still remain the United States, which from now on will be Germany's most formidable commercial rival. It is true that Germany might make an alliance with that power against Great Britain and advance with her hand in hand, but it does not appear as though German diplomacy were moving that way.

It is most probable that the German Empire, heir to our former animosity against the United Kingdom, will sooner or later engage single-handed in a duel with Albion and strive to wrest from her certain of her colonial possessions.

What regions seem most inviting to the German gaze? We already know, for the newspapers beyond the Rhine have the virtue of not veiling their aspirations. Egypt and the territory bordering on the Persian Gulf will be the object of a conflict which will be settled in a few naval engagements and by a German invasion of Scotland.

The English read some time ago the romantic story of *The Battle of Dorking*, and, in establishing their new naval station of St. Margaret's Hope, they are well prepared for the eventuality they feared. It may also be asserted that the entirely unlooked for *rapprochement* between England and France has no other object than to check the Machiavellian plan elaborated in Berlin and to confirm, in spite of the Russo-French alliance, the cordial neutrality of France.

Many people may inquire why a conflict between Germany and England seems likely. They will say: Is it not more natural that the two great nations of Germanic origin should march together and thus form the most powerful combination in the world represented by the greatest army and the greatest fleet? In appearance, at least, this would be the most logical course. But it is not included in the ambitions of the Germans. Appetite comes with eating, and Germans are not the kind to stop in the middle of a meal. In order to control the seas Germany must make herself master of the English Channel, thus to maintain connection with America, and of the Mediterranean, to keep the way clear to Oceanica, Africa, and Asia.

To-day an English fleet, or, for that matter a French squadron, which wished to prevent the arrival of wheat and corn at German ports, would only have to take up her position in the Channel or the North Sea. Ships from America bearing the necessaries of life would never dare risk slipping through the meshes of such a formidable net unless escorted by a German naval force of the first rank. And what incalculable advantage it would be for our neighbours if they could install themselves at Rotterdam and Antwerp, turn the North Sea into a German lake, and, like England and France communicate directly with America by the Channel and the Atlantic! Spurred on by a vaulting ambition, Germany yearns for nothing less than to swallow up Holland and Belgium in the Teutonic Federation. It has excellent reasons for such an achievement.

Is not the language of Holland derived from and a deformation of the German? But the principal motive is that the annexation of this Low Country, so wealthy and industrious, would add a new and superb jewel to the Imperial Crown of the Hohenzollerns. From the Dutch point of view, why should not Holland be anxious to enter the German family of states and become a party to an immense Zollverein, whose commerce would then rise to the value of twenty thousand million francs, about $4,000,000,000, or more than that of the whole British Empire put together?

These hopes are alluring, but the partisans of Greater Germany would certainly find them wounded by the opposition of two powers: France and England, who would always prefer to have as neighbours two little inoffensive countries like Holland and Belgium rather than to feel that they were constantly threatened by sixty odd millions of Germans.

In all probability, France alone would not draw sword

in order to prevent this expansion of German power, but it may be considered as certain that England, who has always sought to keep back the French from the mouths of the Rhine and the Schelde, will not suffer the Germans to place themselves there. The consequences of this state of things are inevitable: Either the Germans will renounce their ambitions in the West, or the English must resign themselves to seeing German ports of the first rank like Antwerp, Rotterdam, and Hamburg attract to themselves the commerce which now goes to London, Dover, Hull, and Glasgow.

Between the interests of the two countries there is an obstacle which is too pronounced to permit hope of conciliation. England, feeling herself threatened, has already begun to take the first steps toward a coalition strong enough to stop the Germans on their march. It is toward France, her "hereditary enemy" that the nation on the other side of the Channel fatally turns her gaze. The Foreign Office seeks to revive the old alliance of Rosbach and Waterloo with this difference: It is the French who will play the *rôles* of Blücher and Bülow.[1]

[1] It remains to be seen what is really our interest. Ought we to play the game with the merchants of the City and again become their dupes? Ought we not rather to repulse England, of whom the entire world is victim, and frankly extend the hand of friendship toward Germany, whose loyalty we can be sure of counting on? But what about the negotiations, and who will undertake them? For such work France would need superior statesmen, and Germany a prince and government less intricate. But whatever they be, it would seem that French interests are not such as to draw our country to England, who only thought of us when she became frightened by menaces from the Continent. We are also Continentals, and, among the Germans, the Celts, our brothers, are in great number. Nature has separated us from the English, and placed us near

In order to frustrate this plan, which is already taking shape on the diplomatic horizon, William II. no longer relies on the Triple Alliance, the weakness of which becomes more pronounced from day to day. His Majesty is looking everywhere for an enemy of England who, at the same time, will not affright German progress. Unfortunately this rare bird is difficult to hunt out.

The Kaiser has made soundings in the direction of Russia. Austria-Hungary and Russia are just now in accord regarding their eternal Balkan discussions, and the moment seems auspicious for agitating the idea of a sort of Holy Alliance which, while defending the principle of royal authority against the liberal tendencies of western nations, should maintain the respect of all Europe. The Kaiser has very cleverly let it be understood in St. Petersburg that Germany would throw no obstacle in the way of Russian ambitions in the Far East. He seems also to look with complaisance upon the development of Russian interests in Afghanistan and India. But surely William II. retains the mental reservation never to allow Russia to carry out such a formidable augmentation of her forces, which, some day, might be turned against him with fatal effect.

As far as he has gone in his analysis of the Franco-

the Germans. Let us listen to the voice of nature. Moreover, we have nothing to fear from England alone. The harm which England would be able to do us, in case of war, is nothing in comparison with what we could inflict her. Facts are facts, and figures, figures. We must more than ever persuade ourselves of the excellent qualities of that *bon-mot*, so expressively employed by Baron d'Haussez, minister of Charles X., who, when threateningly interrogated by the English ambassador as to when we were going to conquer Algeria, replied: "*Monsieur, l'Angleterre . . . on s'en f. . . . .!*

English *rapprochement* the Kaiser sees in it merely a sign of the faithlessness of France toward her ally and an attempt made on the part of England to deprive the Russian Empire of the support of the French navy in the Russo-Japanese war. At the same time, German diplomacy insinuates that the French Republic is not the natural ally of Holy Russia, and that the French are frivolous and unstable, and that an alliance of the three Empires of the North would be sufficiently powerful for the realisation of their respective plans.

In spite of this proposal, concocted since the last interview of the Czar and Kaiser at Wiesbaden, it would seem that Russia has not been favourably impressed with the plot hatched in Wilhelmstrasse. If it be true that our ally has interests in the Far East important enough for her to send vast armies for their maintenance and extension, it is also true that her interests in the Nearer East and in the West are not less important.

She distrusts, and with reason, the extension of that power of which Germany, ever jealous of her, dreams.

If she be victorious in her war against Japan, she will dictate a treaty of peace to the Empire of the Mikado the clauses of which shall be implicitly ratified by Europe. As to Germany, she will not give something for nothing, and if our ally imposes on the Far East the full and entire force of her will, it will be in exchange for equally weighty concessions. One may well believe that William II. will not allow the occasion to slip without pressing the Czar to acquiesce in the extension of Germany to Rotterdam and Antwerp, at the most opportune moment — an impossible acquiescence. That is the black spot in the whole scheme.

Fortunately the vague desires for German expansion toward the mouths of the Meuse and the Schelde can

find no nation in Europe interested in supporting this *Drang nach Westen.*

Italy? No, for this kingdom is in a most delicate position. Her friendship for England obliges her to combat a project so manifestly contrary to British interests. On the other hand, the German alliance could only offer as *quid pro quo* for her support a prospective and extremely uncertain return of Nice, Corsica, Savoy, and the acquisition of Tunis. For the last twenty years Germany has amused her ally across the Alps with promises. Italy seems to give herself up to a coquette who threatens to remain eternally platonic. If Germany were to add to her prospective gifts Trento, Trieste, Egypt, Crete, and Albania, Italy might possibly lend her support. But, still bent on satisfying German ambition in Holland and Belgium, William II. would not thus commit the mistake of alarming Austria-Hungary nor would he allow it to be supposed, even by vague promises, that he had the intention to pay for the aid of Italy with fragments of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Moreover, Germany will never be able to dispose of Egypt; much less hand it over to the Italians.

However singular it may appear at first sight, this whole scheme we shall easily show to be well founded in the following chapter in which we shall study the possibilities of German expansion toward eastern Europe. For the present, it will be sufficient to say that Germany, after so many seductive dreams, finds herself surrounded on all sides by insurmountable difficulties. Her expansion toward the west of our continent is a mere chimera. Does she possess sufficient resources readily to win German territory in the rest of the world?

Whether or not German emigration to foreign lands continues to be as formidable as it was once (for at the

present time it scarcely exceeds twenty-five or thirty thousand souls a year) one may still inquire on what region over the seas might William II. set his choice with a view to have it enter the German orbit. It is only in South America where we find German colonisation developed to any great extent. These regions, which are in a perpetual state of revolution might be able to furnish the sought-for occasion for intervention. But how would it benefit the German Emperor to found a Teutonic state in one of the republics of South America? To furnish an outlet for the enormous population which is suffocating within the narrow limits of his Empire? But it is possible that Germans may rebel against this official colonisation. Have they not declined to present themselves in the German protectorates of Africa and Oceanica? It is true that such a German state in South America would have, in his Majesty's eyes, a usefulness of the first order; it would be able to furnish Germany with what the latter lacked in cereals and provide it with those tropical products—coffee, tea, chocolate, cane sugar, and various spices—of which to-day she makes such a large use.

Which shall it be, Brazil, Venezuela, or Bolivia, that shall receive the signal honour of becoming his Majesty's colony? The Emperor is not decided on this point, for the little states of South America betray no desire to place themselves under German tutelage. Everything will depend on the intensity of their commercial relations with Germany and especially on the political influence which German immigrants will be able to acquire over there. They are numerous in Brazil, particularly in the State of Rio Grande. Their colonies are especially influential in Bahia, Pernambuco, and Rio Janeiro. Certain German geographers declare Chile to be the favoured country, for Chile, by the pro-

ducts of her soil, the wealth of her inhabitants, and the excellence of her ports ought to invite the attention of Germany. But Chile is situated on the Pacific, and unless we can imagine Germany controlling the new Panama canal on its completion, it is hard to entertain the delusion of a German state establishing itself on the south-western coast of America. Besides, there is foreseen the opposition of the United States, which by virtue of the famous Monroe Doctrine, pretends to reserve America for Americans alone.

We know how little Washington and Berlin are mutually sympathetic. From this point the future does not appear to be less full of perils than the past and the present. The excessive increase of the American fleet will naturally render the United States more energetic in insisting upon its demands. If William II. desires to have the Imperial navy rival that of the American Union, he must, by dint of personal influence, obtain from the Reichstag an annual naval budget of 400,000,000 francs, or $80,000,000, that is to say, a budget about $25,000,000 larger than the one which Germany provides for to-day and considers sufficiently exorbitant. Moreover, as the Kaiser continues to think of augmenting the ranks of his army, the annual effective force of which being 600,000 men, is not sufficient for the realisation of the grand schemes of its chief and master, we may be permitted to inquire, where the budget of the Empire would find the necessary elasticity to bear this constant growth.

It seems proper to add that the United States has no need to support half a million of men on peace footing. It can, therefore, afford colossal sums for its navy. It is inevitable that the German navy will remain inferior to its rival without even the hope to realise, by some chance stroke, a great debarkation of troops on the soil

of the American Continent, for the distance between Hamburg and New York is too great to permit a large fleet of transports, with convoys, to pass from Germany to America.

The end is not in sight of this latent conflict between the two countries; but neither of the adversaries seems inclined to precipitate matters by an attack which would have such grave consequences for the vanquished.

From all these considerations one incontestable truth detaches itself: Germany thought of her maritime expansion too late; there no longer remains free land to which conquest has left the great nations of the world indifferent. Africa is permanently parcelled out, with the possible exception of the Portuguese colonies and the Congo Free State, the fate of which still hangs in suspense. Germany can no longer hope for territorial conquests in that part of the world. Besides, if one may judge from the part that Germany has played toward the colonies already possessed by her in the Dark Continent, new ones would be little to her advantage. In truth, her colonial successes are worse than mediocre, for the total commerce of German Africa (a territory of 1,800,000 square kilomètres containing 6,000,000 inhabitants) does not exceed 25,000,000 marks worth of German importations. One may, therefore, imagine that by doubling the territory over which floats the black, white, and red flag, Germany would not perform a commercial and political operation of inestimable value.

In America, German expansion would come to grief through opposition of the United States. In Oceanica, all the islands are divided among European powers and no free land remains, and Germany could scarcely count upon the hypothetical resource of annexing the Dutch archipelago of the Sunda Islands, in case she

happened to become master of Holland. To take possession of Sumatra, Java, and Borneo would certainly be a fine stroke, but what would the neighbouring Americans installed in the Philippines think, and what their cousins the Anglo-Saxons, who are scattered throughout three-quarters of the Malay Archipelago?

There remains, therefore, only Asia, that is to say Asiatic Turkey and the immense territory of China. At Chang-Tong (the port of Tsin-Tow, terminus of railways and centre of rapidly developing commerce) on the Yang-Tse-Kiang, at Shanghai, Hang-Kow, Ning-Poo, and Canton the English are the dominating factor. At the present time, half the trade, between China and Europe is carried by English ships, although Great Britain's prestige in this respect is not what it was fifty years ago. And Germany and Japan are ready to profit by what she has lost. Was not this shown in 1903 by the Germans purchasing and their Government subsidising several steamers for service between Singapore and Bangkok between the Philippines and Singapore? The trade of Bangkok which, in 1899, gave sixty-two per cent. to English houses, showed, in 1902, that fifty-five per cent. was being carried on by Germans.

Naturally, the Germans in China have increased in number. Following the English and keeping pace with the Japanese, they are ready to tackle the Chinese world and to penetrate it with Germanic ideas —if, indeed, there are ideas which are truly Germanic. Still, in looking further, one learns that German successes in China are limited to the merchant marine, and hence, are only relative. However brilliant up to the present time has been the business of the German navigation companies, everybody, who is acquainted with transport problems, knows that rivalries among

themselves, diminution of freight values, and the rising price of coal have contributed to cut down their profits. Happy the Hamburg stockholders, who have been able to put away ten per cent. in dividends, which will soon be nothing but a memory.

Can one say that, in the industrial enterprises of China with which Europeans are associated, the Germans by their activity and success have rendered themselves conspicuous among the people of the white race? On this point a comparison between what the French and the Germans have accomplished in regard to railway development, is particularly instructive. Even aside from the Indo-Chinese French line, the transportation value of which amounted to 500,000,000 francs in 1902 and which ought to be regarded among the most notable colonial conquests of modern times, it appears that we have left the Germans far behind us. They are building the Chang-Tong line which, when completed, will cover 400 kilomètres; they have also surveyed a line of 800 kilomètres across the provinces of Tchiti and Nanking. Germany has to her credit, therefore, 1200 kilomètres of railway in the Middle Kingdom. But, in the meantime, France has built an enormous line from Peking to Hankow (1000 kilomètres), has undertaken the construction of the Yunnan line (500 kilomètres), and secured concessions for a railway from Nanking to Lang-Son (Tonking), and one between Canton and her new possession of Kwang-Chow. To the 1200 kilomètres of railway concessions obtained by Germany, the French can show 2000, of which 1500, that is to say, three quarters, is already built.

Taken all in all, German expansion in the Far East, however satisfying it may be, is by no means extraordinary, and one must be careful not to exaggerate it.

The famous saying of William II. quoted at the beginning of this chapter, can hardly be justified at present, except by the rapid growth of the German merchant marine. The ambition of the Germans is to supplant the English as the rulers of the sea. German ship-owners know very well what benefits the British merchant marine has derived from its carrying trade, in spite of increasing obstacles. The annual gains of British ship-owners are estimated at not less than £100,000,000, drawn indiscriminately from all countries. William II. has figured out that a portion of this trade should pass into German hands; also, that the crews of the vessels thus employed would furnish excellent recruiting material for the German navy; and finally, that the benefits thus realised, would be scattered over Germany's maritime population, increase the wealth of the people—still too poor—and permit them more easily to bear the increasing burdens of taxation.

The idea is excellent. Its execution is being actively pursued. But what will be its definite results? These practical German merchants have not begun by creating lines of navigation along the routes traversed by the English lines; they have simply established themselves where the English were not. Thus, in a way, English maritime expansion becomes limited while its old routes await the arrival of unscrupulous and fearless rivals. The thing is to know what it will cost the new-comer to oust the old occupant. The future is full of eventualities.

From whatever point we examine the German horizon, we see it ill-defined and everywhere overshadowed with formidable difficulties. If William II. only knew how to remain tranquil and would study how to satisfy the needs of reform which are agitating his subjects,

and not crush them under the weight of taxes for the maintenance of a formidable army and navy; if he would find the way to develop German industry without ruining agriculture; and if, in short, he should succeed in enriching his people by making daily life more easy for each individual, the future of Germany would be assured.

But is William II. the man to solve so many serious problems? The manner in which he has so far governed his people, permits one to doubt it.

Suppose one of those ancient law-makers, whom classic times loved to venerate with the title of Sage, were to contemplate the spectacle which the Germanic Confederation presents to-day, he would cry:

"This Empire, dragged feverishly along by a dreamer, a temporiser, a fantastic, has longed to undertake everything and has achieved nothing. Its ambition will be its ruin."

PART IV

From Dream to Reality—Hypothesis and Conclusion

CHAPTER I

WILLIAM II. AND THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

MOMMSEN is dead. The venerable historian will never see the triumph of the Imperial policy which he recently predicted with more knowledge of the art of pleasing his sovereign than respect for the philosophy of history. He prophesied that patience, long-suffering, and the apparent defeats of German diplomacy would have their revenge at Vienna on the death of Francis Joseph. This may be taken as "a word to the wise."

The worthy descendant of the Hapsburgs is seventy-five years old; let us suppose that he lives four or five years more—as he is quite likely to do if his condition remains normal. It will then be about 1909 or 1910, when the last act in the secular struggle between the houses of Prussia and Austria will be played on the stage of Europe. In the face of this eventuality, which is rapidly approaching, is it possible to penetrate what the enigmatical Hohenzollern is meditating? Evidently one may do so within the limits which human

reason sets in fathoming the ideas of this extraordinary thinker.

Let us reason, therefore. Let us establish the axioms of this problem so teeming with unknown quantities.

In five years what will Germany be in population and power? What will Austria-Hungary be, on the supposition, that her development continues normal? These data will suffice for the erection of a hypothesis. One need not be afraid of a few dry figures, a few prosaic arguments. The problem is well worth the effort of attention.

In 1909, the Empire of William II. will have 65,000,000 inhabitants, divided between 36,000,000 Protestants and 29,000,000 Catholics. At that date Austria-Hungary will have a population of 48,000,000, thus approximately classified: 28,500,000 Cisleithanians and 20,000,000 Transleithanians. The Cisleithanians, which now number 27,000,000, are at presents divided as follows: Germans, 10,000,000, Slavs, 16,000,000, Latins, 1,000,000. Transleithania or Hungary, which has at present 18,000,000 or 19,000,000 inhabitants, does not include more than 800,000 or 900,000 Germans, spread over the districts of Presburg, Temesvar, and Transylvania. At the death of Francis Joseph, supposing that the event takes place in 1909, the 10,800,000 German Austrians and Hungarians of to-day will then number 11,000,000 or 12,000,000. Thus we have some data from which to argue.

In the year designated only a fourth part of the population of Austria-Hungary will be of Germanic origin. This proportion is not sufficiently large to induce William II. and the Pan-Germans to attempt the absorption pure and simple of the entire dual kingdom. They must confine their ambitions to Cisleithania, that is to say, to German Austria proper, which should have a

population of 10,000,000 Germans, where now it has 9,300,000; to the Tyrol with its 900,000 Italians (now 820,000); to the 4,500,000 Poles of Austrian Poland (now 4,100,000); to the 3,600,000 Ruthenians of Galicia and Bukowina (now 3,400,000); and to the 1,000,000 or 1,500,000 Servians, Croatians, and Roumanians. Ten million Germans and 18,500,000 Slavs, that is what the Imperial ambition will have to confront. If Germany aims at absorbing them and succeeds in incorporating them in the Empire, the Germany of 1909–1910 will have a population of 93,000,000 or 94,000,000 (65,000,000 plus 28,500,000), of which 22,500,000 will be of Slavonic origin — for it must not be forgotten that Germany is at present attempting to assimilate 3,000,000 or 3,500,000 Prussian Poles. Hence it follows, according to the hypothesis of the annexation of Cisleithania by the Empire, that about a quarter of the population of Greater Germany would be composed of Slavs or of people of Slavonic origin.

The danger is that the Pan-Germaniacs purpose to leave outside the Empire the 4,500,000 Austrian Poles and the 3,600,000 Ruthenians. They even advise their abandonment to Russia as a compensation. If this were done, the German Empire of the future would unite Bohemia, Cisleithanian Austria (Upper and Lower Austria), the Tyrol, Carniola, Styria with Trieste, and present a mass of 85,000,000 inhabitants with an opening on the Mediterranean. At the same time, it would still have 14,000,000 or 15,000,000 non-Germans, including the Prussian Poles of to-day.

But the 6,500,000 Czech whose nationality is so active to-day and whose hate for the Germans may be compared to that of our compatriots of East France toward their neighbours, have not the slightest desire to become subjects of the Hohenzollerns. Little by

little, thanks to their fecundity they will reduce the proportion of the Germanic element in Bohemia. It is probable that in five or six years the Saxon strain will be perceptibly diminished in the hilly country between the Ore and the Lansitzer Mountains. In the mean time, the Pan-Germaniacs claim Bohemia and cannot realise that a little nationality may be exerting itself between Prussian Silesia and German Austria. This obstacle is insurmountable, unless the Czech be conquered by cannon shots and made to pass under the yoke like the Poles.

Another obstacle to the realisation of Pan-Germanic dreams comes from Trent or Trento, Tyrol, Styria, and Trieste. In these districts, which are principally composed of Italians and Slavonians, the German population is insignificant. In a great commercial centre like Trieste, a city of 200,000 inhabitants, they scarcely number more than 6000. Will Italy ever permit Germany to lay her hand upon these "irredentist" lands? Will she not exclaim to the Germans of Berlin what she has so often cried to the Germans of Vienna: *Fuori i Tedeschi!* ("Out with the Germans!")

Three serious difficulties of varying importance, therefore, interfere with a Pan-Germania extending from Hamburg to Trieste: I. The improbable consent of Russia to burden herself with the care of the 8,000,000 Ruthenian Poles and the almost certain objection of France (if she be seconded by her ally) to a plan which would render Germany more formidable; II. The opposition of Italy to a scheme for extending German jurisdiction to Trieste; III. The internal opposition which the Empire would meet with at the hands of Czechs, Slavonians, and Poles.

Let us now consider the reasons which would actuate William II. in intervening in Austria with a view to

comparing the obstacles which he will encounter. It will be easy to deduct from them what he will decide to do. But are his reasons compelling?

In Germany there is the Pan-Germanic campaign carried on by Dr. Hasse, and especially the urgent need of agricultural commodities for the present Empire in order to nourish its constantly growing population. German Austria, an agricultural country *par excellence*, would furnish these products. Again there is the leaning of Germany toward the East in search of outlets for her industry in the direction of Egypt, the Persian Gulf, Turkey, and India. Moreover, the temptation to add 20,000,000 souls to the Empire of the Hohenzollerns should not be lost sight of.

In Austria urgency for intervention from Germany is not less. There was a time when the Austrian Germans were all-powerful in Vienna, where a Teutonic minority, thanks to the artistic "gerrymandering" of the election districts, dominated a Slav majority. But this time has gone by. German absolutism received its first blow in 1867, when the Austro-Hungarian compromise, which established two parliaments and two distinct governments under the sceptre of the Hapsburgs, was concluded. The Magyar people were liberated from German tutelage but, in Austria, German supremacy remained. The establishment of a dual government had only been of advantage to Hungary. To-day this dualism seems destined to give way to the only solution which ought to precipitate the schemes of the Pan-Germaniacs or cause them to be forever postponed—a triumphant confederation!

What we mean by "confederation" is the employment of the word in the Swiss sense—a union, under the sceptre of the successors of Francis Joseph, of the Slav, Magyar, and German peoples of the dual kingdom.

It can not be said that this solution is distant; indeed, it would be already realised but for the selfishness and injustice of the German members of the Reichsrath. The Germans know very well that if they should consent to it, they would lose at one stroke the supremacy which they artificially obtained. But a few of them, wiser and more inspired than the rest, have come to the conclusion that 10,000,000 Germans cannot always govern 17,000,000 Slavs, and they are already resigned to a federal form of government in which each nationality should have equal representation.

The following table appears in that remarkable book by our eminent fellow-writer and friend, M. Chéradame, *L'Europe et la Question d'Autriche*—Europe and the Austrian Problem. The table reveals the progress made by the various peoples forming Austria-Hungary toward the idea of a confederation:

REPRESENTATIVES

	Non-Federalist	Federalist
1873–1879.....	205	148
1879–1885.....	173	175
1885–1891.....	147	185
1891–1897.....	149	183
1897–1903.....	141	191

Thus to-day there are in the Reichsrath a majority of fifty deputies in favour of a confederation, and that notwithstanding the large number of German members. What is more interesting is that a fortieth of the deputies of German origin or proclivities are Federalists, and entirely independent of their Pan-Germanic colleagues, who are for a *status quo* policy while awaiting the intervention of Imperial Germany.

This is what will happen: If before intervening, William II.,—or his successor,—waits for the death of

Francis Joseph or for some event subsequent to his passing, he will run the risk of being confronted by a situation less favourable for his schemes than that of yesterday and to-day.

On one hand, the Slavs and Magyars are frankly partisans of federalisation, which would give them full political rights and a hand in the administration of affairs in proportion to their numerical strength. On the other hand, the Germans, feeling that German intervention is becoming more and more distant, and seeing that their numerical importance is rapidly decreasing before the augmenting Czech, Slav, and Magyar elements, are coming to realise that it is wiser to adhere to the Austro-Hungarian Confederation and to take part in it in just accordance with their depleting numbers.

The only thing to do is for the Pan-Germaniacs to egg-on William II. to act at the first favourable opportunity, with the idea of relieving the Austrian Germans of the despondency which now afflicts them.

Even according to the claims of the Pan-Germans themselves, there are scarcely 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 German Prussophiles in all Austria. The rest are either federalists or are, as yet uncertain, of which course to take. Among the latter is Dr. Lueger, former burgermaster of Vienna, who has declared in favour of a "national, independent" policy, "with no compromising alliances with our neighbours." Pan-Germanism is evidently going into decline on the banks of the Danube.

And as one ill usually begets another, Pan-Germanism has just suffered a severe check in Germany itself. Its founder and most enthusiastic leader, Dr. Hasse, was beaten by a Socialist at the last elections. It is even asserted that the "sacred circle" composed of the

most ardent disciples of the Doctor's doctrines, the *Alldeutscher Verein*, which, up to 1901, had recruited twenty thousand followers, is in financial straits and a prey to internal dissensions. But the devout Pan-Germaniacs assert that these little misfortunes are without importance, because, they say, "the movement is well under way and cannot be stopped."

Let us take them at their word and see how William II. would bear out their theory. Suppose Francis Joseph dead: The successor would be either the Archduke Francis Ferdinand d'Este or Archduke Otho, in case his brother, Francis Ferdinand, whose deafness increases from day to day, did not care to face the trials and tribulations of an accession which would be far from attractive. The Berlin Reichstag would then adopt a resolution in favour of one of the brothers, and William II. would order a general mobilisation of the German army and empty the coffers of Spandau, assuming that anything still remained in them. About 2,000,000 bayonets would be ready to do the Imperial bidding. But would the Kaiser really let loose the dogs of war? He is the last to know. Suppose that the accession in Vienna passed off quickly and without disturbances, how would he justify starting on a campaign?

But the Pan-Germans would look out for this eventuality. They would see to it that disturbances did occur, for it might be taken for granted that the German faction in the Austro-Hungarian army would find itself "insufficient" to put down the aforesaid disturbances raised by their compatriots. This would be all the more easily done as the majority of officers would be German and as the Hungarian officers would not be garrisoned in the provinces of Cisleithania.

This, then, is how the comedy would unfold itself:

The Pan-Germanic League would make a ringing appeal to Germany, begging her to come to the aid of her German brothers who were being maltreated and slaughtered in Austria. The German press of Vienna and Berlin would heap fuel on the flames.—Will not the Hohenzollern Empire intervene?—Is the sword of Charlemagne no longer in the hands of the Cæsar of the Spree?—Are the glorious veterans of Sedan no longer in this world?

One may imagine the uproar. At the same time delegates—or agitators passing for such—would set out from Prague, Salzburg, Innsbruck, Vienna, and Laybach for Berlin to implore his Majesty, Emperor and King, to take a hand in the cause of the unfortunate Germans who were being massacred by the Slavs.

William II., forewarned by telegraph of the departure of the suppliants, would not wait for their arrival. He would order his army to concentrate on Bohemia. Six army corps would remain on the Russian frontier in case of emergency, but it is not likely that they would have any trouble with the Russians, for the excellent reason that the St. Petersburg Government, long since a partisan of the good cause, would allow things to take their course. France would remain circumspect, hesitating, evasive, especially if she were not backed up by Russia. Italy alone would threaten and fume, but her depleted finances would not permit her to mobilise the hundreds of thousand men to assure her of a "permanent position" at Trieste before the arrival of the Germans on the Adriatic. In the meantime, the German faction in the Austro-Hungarian army would have deserted *en masse* to make common cause with the invaders. The Hungarians would retire beyond the Leithanian range, and William II. would solemnly enter Vienna. It would be a war without a single battle.

Is the problem solved? Not at all. The trouble begins. It is much easier to conquer a territory peopled with 10,000,000 men than it is to annex it.

Russia, France, and Italy, surprised by the march of events, or perfectly cognisant of them, would in any circumstances have to be rewarded for their neutrality; for it is impossible to suppose that Germany could repeat, in regard to three powerful nations, the Nickolsburg *coup* of 1866. Then France stood alone, and Napoleon II. was not Bismarck. It is true that although Germany no longer has the "Iron Chancellor," she has Herr von Bülow, who is not without his value, whereas we have in public life men who, more often than otherwise, are only absorbed in party strife and lack interest in foreign affairs. Nevertheless, there are cases in which the least competent statesman is borne by circumstances above his daily weaknesses.

However powerful Germany may be on the day after William II.'s entry into Vienna, she will certainly find one more powerful than she. A mass of 200,000,000 men representing an Italo-Franco-Russian alliance, will be in a position to speak loud. Germany would therefore be obliged to give security. But what would she give?

Italy will, quite naturally, claim Trento and Trieste, which contain a large majority of Italians. But she will not be content with them. She would also like Styria, Albania, and Dalmatia as far as the Mouths of the Cattaro. This situation would permit of only one solution: If Germany wishes a foothold on the Adriatic she could only have, in place of Trieste, which would remain Italian, the Hungarian port of Fiume. This city with its 30,000 or 35,000 inhabitants may some day rival Trieste. As Fiume is at the extreme south of Carniola the " solution of continuity," which would

exist between the Italian possessions of the Adriatic would be less marked, and Italy would probably accept this method of settlement. Moreover, the islands in the Gulf of Fiume would remain Italian.

The claims of France would constitute a great and deeply-rooted obstacle. Without compensation, the French could not reasonably be expected to permit this formidable expansion of Germany. What satisfaction could the Imperial Government give to France? It is perfectly well understood that neither Holland nor Belgium would be ceded to France. These countries are neutral and ought to remain so, especially as the Walloon party of Belgium, which is a most improperly constituted kingdom, may always be at odds with the Flemish party, simply because Walloon is entirely French.[1]

But let us leave the suppression of Belgium out of the question. It would be worse than to have Holland in the Zollverein. Let us not start this hare again. A single solution remains: Alsace-Lorraine and Luxembourg should return under the laws of France. Compared with the German acquisitions, this compensation would be small enough, but by this arrangement Germany would at least satisfy the most legitimate desires of the French. The French frontiers would again be limited by the Rhine and 2,000,000 or so of

[1] A movement for return to France is going on in the Walloon country. For two years Hainaut has been the theatre of significant incidents. At Mons and Charleroi lectures and plays (notably *Jemmapes* of Count Albert du Bois) have maintained with success the French scheme. *A Catéchisme du Wallon*, by the same writer, a profound thinker and gifted poet, and one of the most noted men in Belgium, presents the reasons why the Walloons should again become French; this "Catechism" has been distributed throughout Hainaut, where it has been received with great favour.

people, who had once been French, would be returned to France.

All this, you will say, is hypothetical in the extreme. Be it so, but where in the world would you find a solution more natural—all things considered. Indeed, it is impossible to imagine any other which would have the appearance of likelihood.

Russia would be less easy to satisfy. The idea of the Pan-Germans to leave to her Galicia and Bukowina (4,500,000 Poles and 3,500,000 Ruthenians) is scarcely practicable. The Russians have no desire to see the number of their Polish subjects augmented; the number they already have has given them too much trouble during the last century and their affliction in this respect is not yet over.

It is possible that Russia might accept the incorporation of the 3,500,000 Ruthenians, because such an expansion would give her the natural frontier of the Carpathians and make her a neighbour of Hungary. As far as the West is concerned, it may be taken for granted that the desires of the Czar's government are limited. And unless we admit that William II. would abandon the Roumanians—to-day his allies—to the discretion of St. Petersburg, it is hard to see what direction and shape Russian compensation would take.

The possession of Constantinople by the Russians would have to be preceded by the conquest of Roumania, Bulgaria, and Eastern Roumelia. For the Roumanians have only given their support to the Triple Alliance in the hope of retaking the wealthy province of Bessarabia, which became Russian in 1879, and, in case of the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, of slicing out that piece of Hungary which is occupied by 2,700,000 Roumanians.

What increases the difficulties of this phase of the

question is that the Roumanians are not of Slavonic origin. If Russia were to incorporate Roumania within the Empire of the Czar, she would annex a foreign people who are at the bottom antagonistic to her. But this does not apply to Bulgaria and Roumelia, the majority of whose people are either Slav or of Slavonic origin. Still it is quite likely that if Germany were to permit Russia "to push her point as far as Stamboul" while respecting the integrity of Roumania, Russia in return would permit Germany to secure an opening on the Mediterranean at Fiume.

But in saying this, it is necessary to bear in mind that territorial partition based on these premises would have doubtful stability, since, the Czech of Bohemia, having been annexed by force to the Germanic Empire, would never accept their fate. They would be in a position like that of the Prussian Poles—in perpetual revolt against their German oppressors.

The situation thus set forth admits of no solution, unless indeed Germany should consent to modify her ambition. Suppose, for example, that the dissolution of Austro-Hungarian Empire were inevitable—which is far from proved—William II. could only secure the permission of Europe to annex German Austria by the following concession: I. The independence and neutrality of Bohemia; II. The reconstruction of the ancient kingdom of Poland by the reunion of the Russian, Austrian, and German Poles, thus forming an ideal buffer state between the pure Slavs and the Teutons; III. A federation of the Balkan States by the union of Hungary with Roumania, Servia, and of Bosnia—Herzegovina with Salonica for an opening on the Ægean Sea; IV. The return to France of Alsace-Lorraine and Luxembourg; V. The occupation of Trento (Austrian Tyrol), Trieste, and the coast of the

Adriatic as far as the Mouths of the Cattaro by Italy, with the exception of Fiume, which would be secured by Germany.

Let us now set down a balance-sheet showing the gains and losses of Germany:

TABLE OF LOSSES

	Population
1. Alsace-Lorraine	1,500,000
2. Prussian Poland	3,500,000
	5,000,000

TABLE OF GAINS

	Population
Upper and Lower Austria with Carniola.	10,000,000

DEFINITE GAINS

5,000,000 inhabitants.

Thus the Germanic Empire would include about 70,000,000 souls in 1910.

Italy would annex Trento and Trieste (1,100,000 inhabitants), Dalmatia (545,000), Styria, the Slavonians, and the Croatians (1,300,000), making a total of 3,000,000 souls, in round numbers. According to the natural growth of the population beyond the Alps, in six or seven years, Italy would have in the neighbourhood of 40,000,000. France, who in 1910 would scarcely reach the same figure, would have by the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine and Luxembourg, 42,000,000. And finally Russia, abandoning the rule of 4,000,000 Poles and acquiring 3,500,000 Ruthenians north of the Carpathians, would occupy the mouths of the Danube, together with Bulgaria and Roumelia, who would give her 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 men in addition to Constantinople. Russia would then be an empire containing a population in the neighbourhood of 140,000,000, and

would have extended herself from the Bosphorus to Vladivostok.

You have here a view of what would be the fate of German Austria provided William II. and the Pan-Germans should exercise some moderation. The *status* of Europe would then be assured of actual stability, for a Poland of 12,000,000 souls would separate the two antagonistic empires. A federation of the Balkan States under Magyar domination would assure liberty and independence to the people to-day enslaved by Turkey. Finally, the Turks would be driven out of Europe, and the Germans, having secured a port on the Adriatic, would be able to make their influence felt as far as Egypt, Arabia, Asia Minor, the Gulf of Persia, and India.

England alone would see with keen uneasiness this new *status* of things, for, with the Germans possessing an outlet leading to the Mediterranean, the two peoples would be brought into sharp rivalry. And that is why, I may say in passing, an anti-German coalition would always be assured of the support of Great Britain.

But hypotheses so constructed that they would give reasonable satisfaction to all nationalities will never be realised. Germany, glutted with her military preponderance, believes herself invincible. She is persuaded that she can dictate her wishes to Europe, annex what seems good to her, and dismember and parcel out Austria-Hungary, whenever she pleases. The nations to whom she deigns to drop fragments, should be beside themselves with joy; for the others, there is always the redoubtable sword. So thinks, or was thinking but yesterday, William II.

Just so; but each day that passes means so much hope gained for the dual-monarchy of the Hapsburgs. Since the defeat of Dr. Hasse and the scandalous

adventures of Schönerer in Austria the disturbing elements, that is to say, the Pan-Germaniacs of Germany and Austria, have become more and more discomforted.

The *Los von Rom* movement (a campaign with the object to secure the greatest number of Protestant among Catholic Germans), has had, to be sure, a moment of popularity but at present it shows a marked decline. People, who have been recruited to the cause of Lutheranism are very quick to perceive that the banner under which they have been enrolled is a political banner. They are now returning to their former faith and Church. Every day adds to the numerical strength of the Slavs. Already Slavonic waves are beating against those Teutonic citadels of Linz, Gratz, Klagenfurth, and Innsbruck. Certain cities in Upper Austria which, ten years ago, were entirely German, show now a marked increase of Slavs. The latter constitute a quarter of the population of the Duchy of Salzburg, in Upper and Lower Austria, and a third of the inhabitants of Vorarlberg and Carinthia. And finally, not the least interesting fact is that the Magyars of Hungary, so long enthusiastic over the Triple Alliance, are now getting rid of German ideas as fast as they can. It is interesting to recall at this time the criticisms made by Deputy Ugron, before the Hungarian delegation, against the Germanophile policy of Count Goluchowski, as well as articles published in the *Magyar Hirlap* and the *Budapesti Hirlap* against the Pan-German propaganda. Thus it is that an anti-German movement is beginning to show itself from one end of Austria-Hungary to the other. At the end of five or six years, therefore, to what will Germanic influence be reduced?

The tendencies toward federalism, noted at the beginning of this chapter, will be greatly accentuated.

The continued persecution of Prussian Poles in Posen will detach Austrian Poles more and more from the Germanic policy pursued by the Badenis and the Goluchowskis. The Czech are concentrating in defense of their language and nationality. Careful observers assert that the German element is diminishing even in that Bohemia of which Pan-Germaniacs have dreamed to make "the arch, the immovable rock, the key-stone of the Empire." The Czech people have a policy and propaganda abroad. They have newspapers established for the purpose of informing Europe concerning facts and movements among the people of Bohemia, as for example the *Correspondance Czech* which, curious to relate, after being printed in Berlin up to 1870, has since sought asylum in Paris. It follows from all these considerations that when the death of Francis Joseph occurs—hypothetically discounted for a future still reasonably distant (1909 or 1910)—German influence in Austria-Hungary will be singularly enfeebled.

But, you will say, this argument is founded upon a postulate. Francis Joseph may die to-morrow. In this case should not William II. already have taken his measures?

Not so; for no direct and definite measure (intervening army or mobilisation) can be taken by the Emperor for the excellent reason that it could not be justified by the *present* condition of Austria-Hungary. Just now the Germanic element is enjoying a privileged position in Austria. Represented, as it is in the Reichsrath, by deputies double the number it should have in proportion to its constitutents, when compared with the rest of the Empire, the German party can hardly complain of being *oppressed*. Moreover, a military intervention on the part of William II. to produce the effect expected by the Pan-Germaniacs must have its scope

well defined and its reasons well set forth. Nothing is more impossible.

William II. is posing as the ally, the friend, even as the *son* of Francis Joseph. Is a son to say beforehand that he is going to dispose of the paternal heritage according to views contrary to those of his "father"? This should be still less the case when the property of the parent is contestable and the inheritance problematical.[1]

For once in his life, William II. is obliged to keep still and even to assume an attitude contrary to his own desires and to those of the Pan-Germaniacs. And this is the consequence: Germany and Austria dwell in a state of uncertainty. The neighbouring nations, conscious of this silence, are on the watch. No negotiations, not even in secret, can be undertaken with Russia, Italy, England, or France for rumours of them would quickly come to the ears of the diplomats of Vienna. William II. does not care to compromise the present alliance of Austria-Hungary with Germany by awkward negotiations. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. The result is that Wilhelmstrasse is without any precise plan for the regulation of the Austrian question. It awaits events, and the events themselves will be so sudden that it must have singular skill in order to grab the best advantages from them at the right moment.

And just here, one may put the finger upon the seri-

[1] However problematical it may be, William II. believes all the same that he will have it. It is related—and this has been recently reaffirmed to me in Vienna—that the Kaiser, who is always bothered for ready money, borrowed from Emperor Francis Joseph 16,000,000 florins (about $8,000,000), and that he has taken no pains to pay it back, considering it simply as an honorarium in advance.

ous general defect in German diplomacy for the last fifty years. It has constantly given proof of its most absolute lack of frankness. In inheriting the achievements performed by Herr von Bismarck, Imperial diplomacy inherited also his principles. But the Bismarckian method has truly served its day. And if the diplomacy of William II. imagines that, in the very face of the attentive and prejudiced European powers, it can re-edit the Biarritz interview or the Ems dispatch, it is wofully mistaken. This is an old, worn-out game.

The German chancellor would do much better to play with the cards on the table, and say: "Here is what I want, and there is what I give!" That would be frank, and clever—less brilliant, perhaps, but more sure. Unfortunately, nothing is further from the temperament of William II., whose sword is tin and whose loyalty is brass.

German vanity seems to experience a certain pleasure through the enjoyment—as England did the other day —of "a splendid isolation." But the day will come when she will regret not having treated other people honestly and with having practised a shifting, evasive, tortuous diplomacy on all Europe.

CHAPTER II

WILLIAM II. AND FRANCE

FRANCE occupies a large place in the mind of William II. It is not that he loves the French; much less does he hate them. But they interest him; they preoccupy him. The French character—active, eager, versatile, varied—corresponds to his nature, just as the French themselves find their ultra-ego in him. He studies them, and he tries very hard to understand them. But they are as incomprehensible as he is himself. It is the case of a sphinx regarding a sphinx and a half.

Moreover, the impressions which French public life make on the Germans are most complex. There is irony, jealousy, disdain, and admiration in their manner of judging them. When they estimate French military power, their first impulse is to remember that they have beaten them, but reflection immediately modifies this first impression. "Yes," they say to themselves, "we beat them; but it cannot be denied that our victory was principally due to the numerical superiority of our battalions and to our long-prepared organization." But they reason further and presently their assurance reasserts itself. "This numerical superiority, without which it would be imprudent to bring Germans face to face with Gauls, we are always sure of having in the future, for our population increases in regular progres-

sion, while the birth rate in France remains almost stationary, if, indeed, it does not show a falling off."

That is all very fine; unfortunately Dr. Tant-Pis (Pessimist) at once starts in to correct the conclusions of Dr. Tant-Mieux (Optimist).

TANT-PIS.—What good does this numerical superiority do us since the state of our finances will not permit us to utilise it? It is all very well to have every year 700,000 or 800,000 recruits, if our budget adjusters would assure us the means of utilising them. But such is not the case since we only enroll 230,000 conscripts annually. Now France, for some time to come, will be able to place under arms an annual conscription of 200,000 men. In two years' service, the difference between the two armies would, therefore, be 60,000 men. If they were to be mobilised, the ten classes of reservists would give a difference, in our favour, of 300,000 men. In other words, to an effective force of theoretically 2,000,000 French reservists, we would oppose,—also theoretically—2,300,000. But is this excess of such a nature as infallibly to assure us of victory.

TANT-MIEUX.—Let us not despair. There is nothing contrary to show that our financial and commercial prosperity will not make such advances in the future as to permit us to swell our war budget. French commerce, on the other hand, is stationary, like the population.

TANT-PIS.—Assuredly, but will your profits be in proportion to the expansion of your business? And who shall say that the French with their spirit of economy, the richness of their soil, and their natural inventive genius, will not present a gain practically equal to yours if not superior to it?

TANT-MIEUX (*interrupting*).—O, well what does it

mattter? Germany has not much to get out of France; at most perhaps there is the territory of Belfort, which is the natural complement of our Alsace. After which our Western frontiers would be definitely established.

TANT-PIS.—What! You are still looking for war? Do you even know what it would cost Germany? She could not stand it for more than six months. The political economist Jean de Bloch has told you so. You would spend two milliards of marks a month, making twelve milliards! What folly it would be to undertake such a costly combat for the *sou-worth* you indicate, and even without the certainty of success.

TANT-MIEUX.—Without doubt; still if the French do not want to abandon their hope of revenge and if they keep on claiming the return of Alsace and Lorraine, we are obliged to be always ready to accept war or to declare it, in order to defend "the future lands of Germany."

TANT-PIS (*Dr. Tant-Mieux straightens up. He shows a little anger. A pause.*)—I should not be disposed to restore these provinces to the French without pecuniary or territorial compensation. And no one in Germany would accept a pure and simple revision of the treaty of Frankfort under the pretext that this treaty had been a violation of the right that people are supposed to have to dispose of their nationality as they will. But I am not one of those who stupidly assert that these provinces are *intangibles*, should the French offer us in exchange two or three times their value.

TANT-MIEUX.—And what could they offer us *Mein Herr*, which would be worth two or three times Alsace and Lorraine? These provinces have no price!

TANT-PIS.—I agree with you, *Mein Herr*. But it is no longer a question of giving us money. Did n't we get five milliards out of it? Allow me simply to prove,

what you are not far from discussing since you ask, with some curiosity, what would they give you in return. At the bottom of your argument, *Mein Lieber, Doctor* Tant-Mieux, there is an implication, a scrap of *roublardise*. You say: "If these excellent Frenchmen, these worthy Gallic pates, as Mommsen calls them, so *naïfs* and so credulous, could make with us 'a royal peace' and not 'a tradesman's peace,' we would be able to realise thereby an excellent operation."

TANT-MIEUX.—I accept the implication you accuse me of. We will never give up the Reichsland. This earth is sacred. Moreover, why should we give it up? Who asks for it? A few brawlers? I have no cause to be alarmed? Have you read the articles and speeches of M. Jaurès? That is what rèassures us. French Socialism, which before long will be triumphant, is not only for peace but a fine tool for military disorganisation. Have you not heard that in the country of *la revanche*, they talk constantly of desertions and of refusals to obey officers? Have n't you heard of officers resigning? Our dear neighbours are going right straight towards a system of militia, while we are methodically augmenting our forces, preserving in our ranks an iron discipline, and are ready to go to war at the first sign from our Emperor.

TANT-PIS.—*Taratata!*—Do you really believe so, my dear optimist? Think of our Socialists! If the French have Jaurès, have we not Bernstein and Wollmar? If they have Guesde, have we not Bebel? Voting Socialists number eight hundred thousand in France; we have three million.

TANT-MIEUX.—O, pshaw! Ours will never agree. Therefore, no danger. Moreover, they are "Germans before anything else." Bebel has said that loud enough.

TANT-PIS.—Words! Words! They are none the less

dissatisfied with the present *régime*. A third of Germany complains of the politics to which the two-thirds force them to submit. This proportion is rather large.

TANT-MIEUX.—I am joking, am I? If the revolutionists move, the Emperor has the Grenadiers of the Guard. He would have them open fire!

TANT-PIS.—Folly, folly, *Mein Herr*. Do you not see that Socialism has impregnated with its ideas this army of which you are so proud? Have you not read the books of Beyerlein and Lieutenant Bilse? Are you sure that soldiers, who come from the working class, will always obey the order to fire on their brothers?

TANT-MIEUX.—But we hardly ever have any strikes; while in France. . . .

TANT-PIS.—You do not have them because up to the present time industry has been sufficiently prosperous. We have passed through the period of "fat cows," and probably, like everybody else in the world, we shall know a time of "lean" ones. Just now, German manufacturers are making a supreme effort to keep up their industry to its former status; they are neither sending away their employees nor cutting down salaries. But how long can they keep this up?

TANT-MIEUX.—They will keep it up. We are not like the French, crushed down by taxes. Their finances are involved; their debt is enormous.

TANT-PIS.—That, however, does not prevent their Three Per-cents., even under a least advantageous administration, from remaining in the neighbourhood of 100, while our Three Per-cent. Consolidated is only at 90. I speak of the Three Per-cent. German Imperials. How do you explain that?

TANT-MIEUX.—That is indeed singular. All the same, our total debt is only seventeen milliards, while theirs goes beyond thirty. Moreover, ours does not

actually exist, since the State owns the railways which it can always transfer and extinguish its debt.

TANT-PIS.—Singular reasoning! If the State sells its railways who will buy them? Doubtless the German people. You simply make a transfer of funds. You add that the railways bring in an annual profit to the German State. When they shall have passed over to companies, good-bye to the profits which have so far barely served to cover the expense of our extraordinary war budget.

TANT-MIEUX.—Bah! Germany is a nation of the future. The French have only a past.

TANT-PIS.—Antitheses even of this point and force will not suppress, in your neighbourhood, a people of forty million souls. Be their friend, or be their enemy; but be something.

TANT-MIEUX.—It is for them to reveal their thought and to publish their intentions.

TANT-PIS.—Permit me? Thirty-three years ago you made cruel, savage, and merciless war upon these French people; you imposed upon them the weightiest treaty possible; since then you have been constantly jealous of their revival; a little later you are going to declare war again against them because they are recovering too quickly from the disasters into which you plunged them; you would have them isolated in Europe, if you only knew how to perform that feat. In a word, you have become hypnotised by them and run the risk of forgetting the rest of the world. You led them into colonial politics to make them forget the hole in the Vosges, and now you are jealous because success has crowned their colonial enterprises. Your intrigues have no end. You hinder, in every possible way, their military or naval demonstrations, even though these demonstrations be most legitimate—as for example in

the last Franco-Turkish dispute. And you would like to see these people humiliated before you, and to have them ask your pardon for faults which they did not commit, and you say with the gravest possible face: "Let us be friends, Cinna." But everybody is not Augustus, nor does Cæsar live to-day.

TANT-MIEUX.—But is not that just what the French are who declared war against us in 1870?

TANT-PIS.—But did not we want them to? Had we not expressly set forth the Hohenzollern candidature to the throne of Spain? And that Ems dispatch?

TANT-MIEUX.—As conquerors, could we make peace without either territorial or financial compensation?

TANT-PIS.—Exactly, but why treat France more severely than Austria? Is it not a little singular that the French, who permitted us to found German unity at Sadowa and to whom we had promised the Palatinate for their neutrality, felt themselves obliged, a little later, to give up to us Alsace and a part of Lorraine out of pure confidence in us?

TANT-MIEUX.—They were *naifs*. *Tant Pis!* so much the worse!

And so, in the year of grace 1904, might well converse two worthy Germans interested in the future of their country. Their conversation might continue in this way for a long time without their being able to get down to a common ground of argument, for the debaters talk from two extreme points of the horizon. In order that they may reach an agreement on a definite theme, they would be obliged to talk on for all eternity, or new facts appear to divert the discussion through a channel imposed by the force of things acomplished. These persons of such contrary views are not fictitious. They are embodied in William II. himself. These two adversaries, mentalities, policies are constantly wrangling

in the undecided brain of the Emperor and King. He would like, if he only dared. . . . He speaks loud and dramatically concerning the exactness of his intentions; he vociferates to the entire world the permanency of the victories won thirty years ago; however, however, . . . one feels that his voice strives rather to convince itself than others. Events are stronger than men—even when these men command sixty millions of their own. William II. knows very well that he will pass away; the Hohenzollerns will also pass; but there is no limit to right and justice; they are eternal.

France will wait; she will allow her European enemies and friends plenty of time for reflection. Certain hates will vanish; certain obstacles will disappear. And who knows whether it may not be the German Michel[1] himself who will give the order to his government to repair the injustice committed to our detriment? Through many ages, the Rhine was the historic frontier which separated the Gaul from the German. History repeats itself. A day will come when the great river will again separate the two great people of the West. Peace may return to France what war took away from her. The treaty of Westphalia gave her Alsace. Two hundred and twenty-three years later the treaty of Frankfort took it away from her. The Germans waited two centuries for their revenge. Let the French hope patiently and wisely for theirs. Incontestably, the French of 1904 are nearer their desire than were the Germans of 1682.

And now what shall we conclude? What results may reasonably be supposed to follow the facts and theories that we have presented?

[1] The surname of the German type which is supposed to be incarnated in the spirit of a crowd. It is the German *Jacques Bonhomme.*

William II. will leave Germany unstable, divided, poverty-stricken, nerveless, and feeble. As soon as he shall have disappeared, the fatality of his work of self-advertising and noise will be revealed, and his people will detest him just as much as they now admire him, naïvely carried away as they are by the stage setting and the trumpet blasts of an illusion of Power. History will judge with severity the forgotten grandson of the "never-to-be-forgotten grandfather"; it will not pardon his ingratitude towards Bismarck, nor his cruel persecution of the Poles, nor his useless threats against the Socialists, nor his constant recantations before Europe, nor his compromising relations with financiers. History will take, for just what they are worth, the *Kaiserreden*, and will show the frightful emptiness of this sonorous rubbish, of this *fatras sonore*.

The Emperor and King who thus dreamed of making Berlin the hub of the world may be a *malade*, but he is, moreover, an *ignorant*. To this fact is essentially due the vanity which sterilises his enterprises. He really knows nothing. One looks in vain in his words, examines their humour, their substance, their intelligence, their utility, their precision, their good sense, and their intent. Only occasionally do we find gleams of almost human intelligence amid the platitudinous commonplaceness of his incoherent declamations. This man is always on the surface of everything. His brain is a void, and, sadder yet, his heart is a Sahara. Honour does not blossom there, and there pity dies. Not even a telegram of his shows the contrary; it is the gift of noise which counts. The massacred Armenians bear witness to the influence at Constantinople of this pitying sovereign, just as President Krüger, proscribed and chased out of Germany, reveals the nobleness of the Emperor, this knight errant of Berlin.

Poor Emperor! One may pity him, since the doctors excuse him; but one should also pity his people, this great people, when they are not the dupes of his delusions, who have the excellent dream of a federal union among all the German-speaking countries. Such a union would be singularly productive of results calculated to fortify Europe which has everything to fear from the New World and the Yellow peoples, and many valuable men have wished to follow their arts of peace in a tranquil Germany. But they have seen their organisations slandered by the incoherent harangues and bravados of William II.

How many sensitive minds, especially among the Celts of Southern Germany, have recognised the impotency of this successor of the Hohenzollerns, and feel the uselessness of the warlike and burdensome Prussian supremacy.

How many sensitive hearts in all the Germanic countries are disgusted with that puerile duplicity which characterises the diplomacy of Wilhelmstrasse—a diplomacy which was out of date even in the days of Frederick the Great.

Meanwhile, William II. reigns, Prussia dominates, and Wilhelmstrasse conducts the affairs of the Empire according to the confused views of the august Kaiser. In ten years we shall see what Germany and the entire world will think of William II.

In monarchical countries it is a fine thing to have on the throne a personage who can play the leading *rôle* with feverish vigour; but, from a practical point of view, it is possibly better to have in that part merely an honest, healthy man.

THE END.

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